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AH Philosophy Part 122

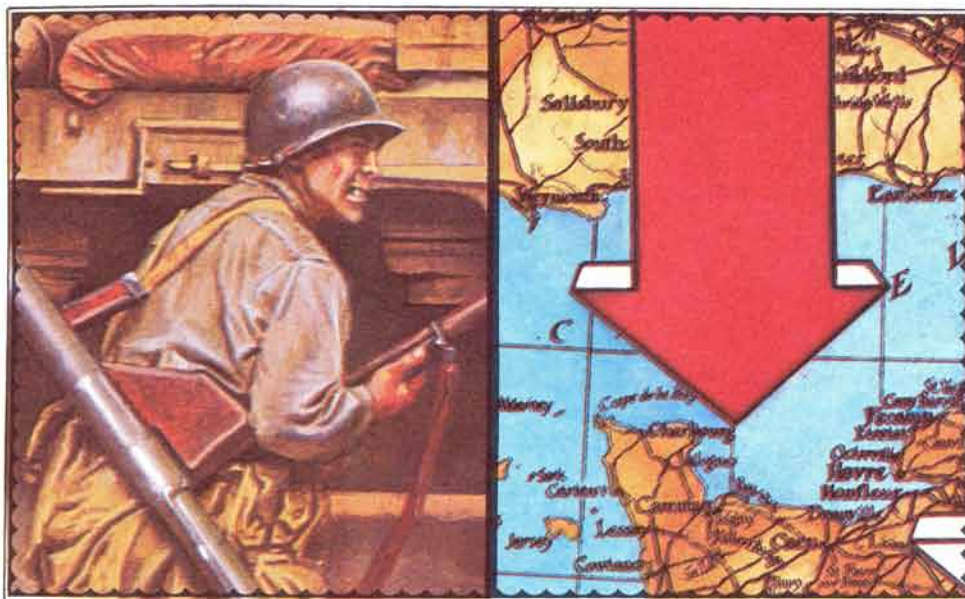
I have, over the past few years, had letters from *SQUAD LEADER* enthusiasts who would hope that more space could be devoted to their favorite game. And I've even had the occasional letter suggesting that we start a magazine devoted to that game alone. With the release of *ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER* and its modules, and my decision that we could no longer afford to devote space to the elder version in these pages, those "occasional" suggestions have become more numerous. However, there are simply not enough devoted players to make such a regular magazine practical and so I set my mind to another approach.

Always looking for a way to see my name in print, I drafted a proposal to the management of The Avalon Hill Game Company outlining how we might produce a professional *ASL/SL* annual—similar to the various "Wargamer's Guides" for some of our other popular titles which have appeared from time to time. I even volunteered to edit it, fool that I am.

In response, I was informed that such an undertaking represented a major decision, and was asked to poll the readership to get some feedback on whether it would be commercially viable. To be blunt, we would need to be assured that we could sell a few thousand before we could commit ourselves to such an undertaking.

As I envision it, the annual would be a full-color publication timed for release at *ORIGINS* each year. I would like to see it consist of 64 pages. It would be exclusively devoted to the play of *SQUAD LEADER* and its gamettes (which currently have no coverage in any other major periodical, including *THE GENERAL*), and to *ASL* and its growing family of gamettes and additions. Of course, *Deluxe ASL* would also be given space. In short, the main emphasis would be on *SL* (and *COI*, *COD* and *GI*) and *ASL* (along with *BV*, *PARA*, *SOF*, *YANKS*,

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Land of Ninja



The year is 1100 A.D.

You are brave samurai — skilled warriors in the employ of Lord Uesigi Toshimichi. You escort his nephew, Tametaka, on a diplomatic mission into unfriendly Suruga province. Controlled by the powerful Shiki clan, Lord Uesigi's foes have long disputed his control of Totomi province.

After several days, while awaiting the return of Tametaka from a meeting with the Shiki lord, you awaken to a soft crash issuing from nearby bushes. A quick search reveals the body of a comrade, one of the Uesigi samurai dead of terrible wounds. In his outstretched hand, scrawled in his own blood, are blurred characters on a strip of paper: "*Treachery . . . Tametaka slain . . . troops . . . Shiki . . .*"

You have failed to protect Lord Uesigi's nephew. This is a terrible disgrace and a stain upon your honor. You must decide upon a course of action to clear your name.

■ Will you attempt to avenge him? Anyone making such an attempt should be wished better karma in the next life, because a dozen men storming a castle is suicide.

■ Do you commit seppuku to atone for the failure? This course expiates your breach of loyalty, but of itself is another breach of loyalty to Lord Uesigi.

■ Do you choose the wisest course — warning Lord Uesigi of the Shiki treachery? You must escape the hostile territory and travel back to Uesigi's castle. Even if you succeed, you may still have to commit seppuku to atone for the death of the nephew.

Land of Ninja is a *RunesQuest* supplement set on Earth. The gamemaster can choose to introduce only historical elements into his *Ninja* campaign or he can add the gods, spirits, and monsters from Japanese legend to create a fascinating blend of history and myth.

Land of Ninja Includes:

■ **Players Book** — character generation notes, pronunciations, names, occupations, new skills, Japanese ships, notes on Nihon, Samurai society, Ninja, personal virtues, elements of Bushido, Honor, the obligations of Giri, social structure, living conditions, customs, Japanese religion and magic, glossary.

■ **Gamemasters Book** — the Nihonese world, an adventuring history, Ki skills, notes on civilization, creatures, comprehensive reference list.

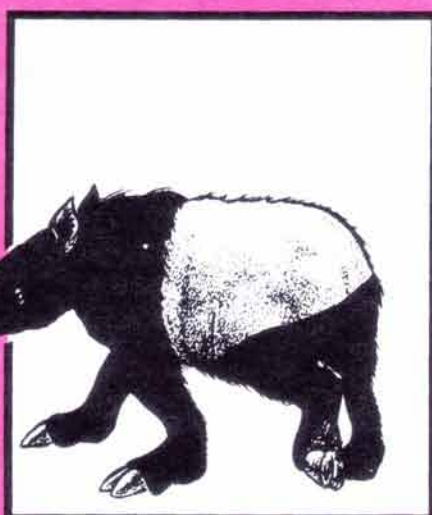
■ **Scenarios Book** — planning a campaign, suggested campaign, The Hatamoto's illness.

■ **Play Aids** — map of Nihon, master Nihon character sheet, ship plans.

Land of Ninja is now available for \$16.00 from The Avalon Hill Game Company, 4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214. Please add 10% for shipping and handling to all orders (20% for Canadian orders; 30% for overseas orders). Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.



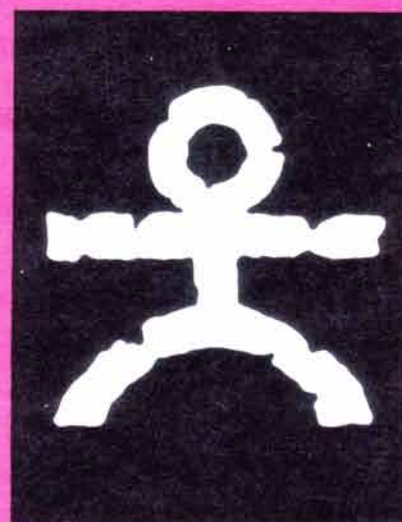
JRUSTELA—Renowned, explorer and zoologist Ocron Everseer returned today from his legendary 12-year, world spanning journey. All morning workers have struggled to unload crates of notes and drawings of thousands of Gloranthan creatures, many collected at great risk to life and limb. "The immense variety and diversity of beings in this world is truly amazing!" he exclaimed as he descended the gangplank of his trustworthy cog. "All I now desire," he continued, "is to complete my dream. I will retire to compile my notes and finish my lifelong work: Everseer's Compendium of Species."



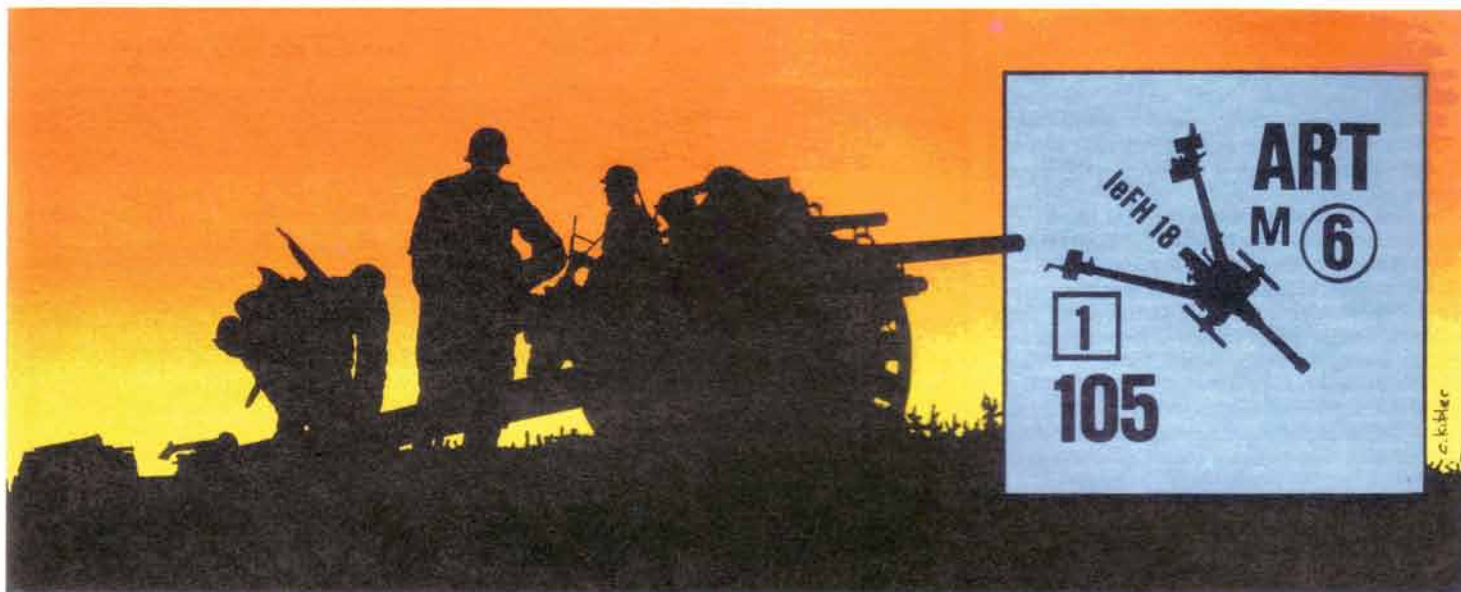
"Glorantha" is a fantasy world originally conceived by Greg Stafford in 1966—well before the Age of Roleplaying. It is a complete universe, self-contained and unique in its creation. The **GLORANTHA BESTIARY** collects descriptions and game information of many creatures drawn from the Gloranthan mythos. Considering the sheer size of the world and the richness of its development, many important, amusing or useful animals have been ignored in the interest of space—the shoveltuskers of Pamaltela, Quombs of the East Isles, and dinosaurs of Slon are left for future releases.

Yet the **GLORANTHAN BESTIARY** still contains more than 60 entries, excerpted from the ancient "Compendium of Species". This booklet holds a sampling of beasties from almost every corner of Glorantha. Some are natural beasts; some are not. Some are intelligent, some chaotic, and some even domesticated. It includes descriptions, game statistics, and innumerable notes for each creature. Additionally, many entries are accompanied by a detailed illustration, and every two-page spread contains a world map showing population distributions of the accompanying entries. The Bestiary is written for *Standard Edition RUNEQUEST*. All materials used from the *Deluxe Edition* are reproduced in this soft-cover book. Of course, the **GLORANTHAN BESTIARY** can be used with *Deluxe Edition RUNEQUEST*.

The **GLORANTHAN BESTIARY** is available now for \$8.95 from The Avalon Hill Game Company, 4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214. Please add 10% shipping and handling to all orders (20% for Canadian orders; 30% for overseas orders). Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.



Gloranthan Bestiary



FIRST IMPRESSIONS

An Introduction to ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER: Offboard Artillery

By Robert Medrow

INTRODUCTION

This is the third, and last, major article of this series. While there will be more of this general type from me in the future, they are all planned to be shorter. To add a personal note, I have enjoyed hearing from so many of you as a result of the first two "First Impressions" articles (which appeared back in Vol. 22, No. 6 and Vol. 23, No. 2). Some of your suggestions will be reflected in "Chapter M" of the rulebook when that section is published. As yet, due in part to a protracted illness and some unexpected professional demands, I have been unable to answer many of your letters. Once this article is on its way, getting back to these will become my highest priority. (If readers have anything they'd like to send along, the address is still 1322 Highland Drive, Rolla, MO 65401.)

Since this article is a continuation of the previous two, the tables begin with "27". As all of the articles deal with the same game system, it is practically necessary to refer occasionally to information found in those earlier pieces. For those of you who are new subscribers to *The GENERAL*, these are available from The Avalon Hill Game Company. The scope of *ASL* is such that trying to be comprehensive in one issue would have been impossible.

Ordnance, in particular the high explosive (HE) stuff, is what we're going to consider in this article. Since the original *SQUAD LEADER* itself, ordnance has always been divided into two main categories: onboard and offboard. Each of these works in very different ways. The mechanics of how onboard ordnance operates has been considered at length in the earlier articles, and need not be repeated here.

Compared to the previous articles, this one has a rather narrow focus therefore. Hopefully, you'll agree that the topics considered are of exceptional importance to good *ASL* play. As always, it is my hope that what you find will make you a better player. Except for the gifted among us, it's probably safe to say that many of the game's mechanics are complex enough that determining a solid, let alone the "best", strategy can be difficult. Until we have a reasonable knowledge of what we can expect from our various weapon systems, we will never play well. And that, of course, is what it's all about. All of the tables are there in the rules to help you develop intelligent doctrines. Where I've been able to devise what seem to be sound ideas about play, those numbers will let you see what prompts me.

OFFBOARD ORDNANCE

Offboard artillery is now in its third incarnation. In *SQUAD LEADER*, things were relatively simple to understand. If you had an artillery module, you drew one of the eight chits supplied. As soon as you looked at it you (but not your opponent) knew how many shots (from one to four) that the module would provide, assuming that you could get and maintain radio contact. Artillery rules remained that easy through *CROSS OF IRON*. It was not until *CRESCENDO OF DOOM* came along that the idea of "battery access" appeared. From *COD* onward, not only did you have to get and maintain radio contact, but you also had to convince the folks back at the guns that you needed help by rolling equal to or below your battery access number. The initial value, nominally "8", could be thought of as vary-

ing from "7" through "9", depending upon whether you began with scarce, normal or plentiful ammunition supplies. Rolls against these effective initial values were modified: -1 DRM for continuation of an existing FFE, and +1 for each Fire Mission already used. Thus, for the first time, the probability of getting another shot became a function of how successful you'd been in the past. If we accept the very plausible argument that artillery batteries had many claims upon their services, this then is as it should be.

The Chits

ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER continues this concept, but does so in a different way. Now, an artillery module comes with a specified number of black chits and red chits. If, when it becomes necessary to gain battery access, a black one is drawn, the guns are available. In *ASL*, each black chit drawn represents a pair of FFE missions to be resolved in successive player turns. A red chit means that you have to wait until at least the next turn before you can try again. The number of red chits varies from two to four, depending upon both ammunition supply and nationality. However, there is a wild card in this deck that wasn't there before. When the second red chit is drawn, the module is over. In addition, of course, it is still necessary to gain and maintain radio contact—at least through the player turn in which a FFE marker appears on the mapboard. When a chit has been drawn, it is not returned to the cup.

Table 27 lists the chits available for the four major European powers. As you can see, the supply levels

Ammunition supply

Force	Scarce	Normal	Plentiful
English	8/3	8/2	9/2
U.S.	9/4	9/3	10/3
German	8/4	8/3	9/3
Russian	5/3	5/2	6/2

Table 27—Chits (black/red) for the major powers.

Number of Black Chits

	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Number of red	2	3.33	4.00	4.67	5.33	6.00	6.67
Chits	3	2.50	3.00	3.50	4.00	4.50	5.00
	4	—	2.40	2.80	3.20	3.60	—

Table 28—The average number of black chits drawn in unlimited time.

included are still three in number, a fact which will simplify the later comparison between the current worth of an artillery module and its *COD* value. For the United States, "plentiful" is the usual supply condition. These four forces will be the ones examined. As we will see, a careful look at them will be enough to give us a reasonably clear notion of what to expect for any of the forces who've yet to take the field in *ASL*.

Because of the effect of two red chits, the average number of black chits drawn will of necessity be less than the maximum number there, even if we don't think about things such as finite scenario length and the dread specter of radio malfunction. The results of my first effort to look at the worth of an artillery scenario are to be seen in Table 28. From the previous table, a normal German artillery module comes with eight black and three red chits. According to Table 28, the average module will then produce 4.00 fire missions, each one worth two FFEs, assuming time and radio performance.

These numbers were obtained in two ways. To begin with, I calculated the average values using the appropriate probabilistic equations. Then I did the sort of thing already mentioned in my first article; I built a computer program which, in effect, sat there and patiently drew chits until it either ran out of black ones or accumulated two red ones. The program then recorded how many black chits had been drawn. And it did this operation over, and over, and over. When this had been done the specified number of times, the average number of black chits drawn was calculated. Since I already knew the answer for the German model, this would have been a waste of time—except that it gave me the opportunity to learn something about how many trials were required in order to get a reasonably accurate answer. In addition, it let me validate the chit drawing logic of another program, the results of which are considered below. Computers are wonderful devices, capable of doing many useful things. Unfortunately, they are also able to give you the wrong answers when you misstate the question.

Average values are of some use. But knowing the average value will not always mean a lot. For example, the average value for the sum of spots of two six-sided dice is "7". However, that number itself only comes up one-sixth of the time, and the sum can be anything from "2" up to "12" (although these extreme values would appear only one-sixth as often as would "7"). To pick another example, suppose you put nine chits numbered "1" through "9" into a cup and drew one out, wrote down the value, put the chit back into the cup, shook it, and repeated the process again and again. The long-term average of the values you recorded would be "5"; however, on the average, "5" would be no more likely to show up than would "1" or "8" or any other number. One more example: let's think about repeating the last experiment, except that this time the cup contains seven chits worth "5", one worth "4" and one worth "6". The average of the values would still be "5", as in the previous example; this time, however, that value appears seven times out of nine.

These examples are intended to demonstrate that it's important to know something about the distribution of the values themselves. That's the sort of information that tells us about the range of possible values and the relative probabilities of each of them. For example, a plentiful American module would, as Table 28 shows, yield an average of five fire missions in an unending scenario. However, you actually only get that many 12.6% of the time. The probabilities for getting zero, one, two, three or four missions are, respectively, 3.8%, 7.0%, 9.4%, 11.2% and 12.2%. Since the distribution is symmetrical about the value of "5", the probability of six fire missions is 12.2%, that of seven is 11.2%, etc. Thus, the distribution is relatively flat from three through seven missions. The moral of all this

Number of Black Chits	% LOS	Number of Red Chits					
		2		3		4	
10	100			46	74		
	70			38	65		
	40			27	51		
9	100	52	79	42	70	40	67
	70	38	66	38	62	31	59
	40	26	50	27	50	27	50
8	100	51	76	43	71	40	69
	70	39	66	38	65	32	57
	40	30	53	27	48	27	48

(a) Values for the British, the U.S. and the Germans.

Chits (black/red)	% LOS	Initial Radio Contact Number					
		6		7		8	
6/2	100	17	37	29	56	46	74
	70	14	30	25	46	31	59
	40	9	21	17	36	25	47
5/2	100	17	36	32	56	44	72
	70	13	29	23	43	33	62
	40	9	21	15	31	22	42
5/3	100	16	32	27	52	34	64
	70	12	27	20	43	27	52
	40	7	18	13	29	18	39

(b) Values for the Russians.

Table 29—The probability of obtaining a FFE on the second player turn, or by the third player turn; -1 contact modifier.

is that you shouldn't expect to get five missions in very many games.

How It Really Works

Of course, scenarios don't go on forever (no matter what some of my opponents claim), and radios are as prone to malfunction as are the other weapons systems in *ASL*. Thus, it is necessary to take these factors into account in some manner. In addition, since the SR (Spotting Round) won't always land where you would wish to see it, the probability that a scattering shot will fall within LOS of the Observer plays a role as well.

To see how these factors enter in, let's review the sequence of events. In the first player turn in which radio contact can be established, a chit is drawn. If a black chit is drawn, the player may place an "Artillery Request" (AR) marker on a hex containing a Location within the observer's LOS. An accuracy dr is then made. As in the past, those forces which use the red To Hit numbers (except the U.S.) must roll a "1" in order to place a Red SR in the hex containing the AR. Everyone else hits the targeted hex on a "2" or less. The only favorable modifier to this is for Pre-Registered Fire (not very common), whereas any Hindrance (all too common) works against you. If the dr is too high, direction and distance of scatter are obtained by rolling two different dice. Should the actual target hex be within the Observer's LOS, a Red SR is placed; otherwise a Blue one is used. Either action ends the phase.

During the following phase, assuming that radio contact has been maintained, the player has several options. If the SR is to be moved, the conservative approach is to merely attempt to move the SR. Since such a correction might scatter, the more adventure-some option of moving and placing a FFE wherever fate wills can produce nasty surprises for either (or both) parties. When such an option has been selected and the FFE falls outside of the Observer's LOS, a Blue FFE marker is used. If, in the appropriate phase of any turn, a Blue FFE is on the board, an effort to move it must be made; a Red FFE need

be moved only if desired. Finally, the Fire Mission can be terminated at will; unless terminated by the owner, a FFE lasts for two successive player turns.

As an aside, this last option is sometimes the best one I have found. As an example, if, as a result of SR placement, the enemy withdraws from a cluster of buildings leaving you with no legal target to which to switch the SR, letting the shells fall may well deprive you of some cover for your own advancing forces.

The Artillery Game Model

In light of these considerations, I wrote a program which would play out 20 player turns, during which it would attempt to get off as many shots as it could—subject to what struck me as a reasonable philosophy. If a Red SR had been achieved, it was assumed that there would be a FFE on the board during the next two player turns. This supposes that a FFE centered about any Red SR would be satisfactory. The net effect probably produces FFEs a bit faster than would really be the case during actual play. To balance that, the program was written so that each successful Fire Mission would be followed by placement of a new AR, even if radio contact was maintained and a Black chit was drawn. Under these circumstances, the option to continue a FFE from the same point exists. Since this option would certainly be effective in some game situations, eliminating it should have the effect of slightly reducing the number of FFEs produced during the game. After the game was over, all sorts of interesting facts were stored away.

This process was then repeated, for a given set of conditions, anywhere from 1000 to 10000 times. Experimentation, beginning with the things mentioned earlier, indicated that 1000 playings would be sufficient for the kind of information of interest to us. For those who are curious about this sort of thing, playing that many "games" took about 90 seconds on my IBM PC. All of the runs made in connection with this article kept it busy, on and off, for over 30 hours.

Number of Black Chits	# of turns	Number of Red Chits					
		2		3		4	
10	5			2.0	1.8		
	10			1.7	1.6		
	20			4.2	3.7		
9	5	2.1	1.8	1.9	1.7	1.9	1.6
	10	1.7	1.6	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.5
	20	4.3	3.9	4.0	3.6	3.7	3.3
8	5	3.3	3.0	3.2	2.8	2.9	2.7
	10	7.7	7.1	6.6	6.2	5.7	5.4
	20	5.8	5.4	5.5	4.9	4.7	4.4
	5	2.0	1.8	1.9	1.8	1.8	1.6
	10	1.8	1.7	1.7	1.5	1.6	1.5
	20	4.4	3.8	3.9	3.6	3.5	3.2
	5	3.4	3.0	3.4	2.7	2.8	2.6
	10	7.7	6.8	6.3	6.0	5.2	5.0
	20	6.0	5.4	5.3	4.7	4.5	4.3

(a) Values for the British, the U.S. and the Germans.

Chits (black/red)	# of turns	Initial Radio Contact Number					
		6		7		8	
6/2	5	1.2	1.0	1.6	1.4	1.9	1.6
	10	1.1	1.0	2.8	2.4	1.7	1.6
	20	2.6	2.3	3.5	2.9	4.1	3.6
5/2	5	2.2	2.0	2.8	2.4	3.2	2.9
	10	4.8	4.3	6.0	5.3	6.7	6.0
	20	3.9	3.7	4.9	4.3	5.5	5.0
5/3	5	1.2	0.9	1.6	1.4	1.9	1.7
	10	1.1	0.9	1.5	1.3	1.7	1.5
	20	2.6	2.1	4.3	2.9	4.0	3.5
	5	2.1	1.9	2.7	2.4	3.1	2.8
	10	4.6	3.9	5.4	4.9	6.0	5.7
	20	3.8	3.5	4.7	4.2	5.1	4.6
	5	1.1	0.9	1.5	1.3	1.7	1.5
	10	1.0	0.8	1.4	1.2	1.6	1.4
	20	2.3	1.9	3.1	2.6	3.2	3.0
	5	1.8	1.7	2.4	2.1	2.7	2.5
	10	3.8	3.3	4.4	4.0	4.4	4.2
	20	3.2	2.9	3.9	3.4	4.1	4.0

(b) Values for the Russians.

Table 30—The average number of FFEs for both 100 and 70% LOS.

The results were printed out after each set of 1000 games, including the conditions under which it had been played and a statistical report of the outcomes. These results can be divided into three topics: how quickly a shot can be obtained, the average number of FFEs obtained, and the distribution of the FFEs. The conclusions I've drawn will be summarized as these topics are considered below.

FIRE FOR EFFECT

All of the other attacks in the ASL system can be executed in the turn in which the target presents itself. With OBA, one is guaranteed of at least one player turn delay. It is, therefore, a matter of some interest to know just how much more than one turn a player might expect to wait. In this, as in so much else in ASL, he who trusts to luck will come up short in the long run.

Table 29 summarizes the probabilities of getting a FFE within the minimum of two player turns, and the probability of getting at least one FFE within three player turns. Thus, each entry consists of two numbers. The results are divided into two sections. This introduces a situation which will be echoed several times before we are finished with studying OBA. Back in the old days, the basic radio contact number for the Germans and the British was "7",

the U.S. was blessed with a "9", and the Russian values rose from "5" to "7" during the course of the war. Now, however, the first three nationalities are all set at "8" and the Russians, while they still start off in a comparative hole, start at "6" and move up to "8". Furthermore, the accuracy dr is the same for the first three, as are the radio repair/permanent malfunction numbers (another relative loss for the American forces). This means that a nine black/three red (9B/3R) chit artillery module will be worth just as much to the German player as it is to the U.S. player. For these reasons, the results of trials for the first three nationalities will generally be grouped together. Since, in general, these forces are comparably supplied with leaders, such differences as exist will be found in the chits available.

The (comparatively) poor Russians end up being segregated because, even when they have a radio contact value of "8", they alone use the 6B/2R, 5B/2R and 5B/3R chit combinations. Since no nationality likely to appear in the game system will be in worse shape, we can expect to see all other forces somewhere in between the Germans/Americans/British and the Russians. It is important to note that the column headings are usually different in these two-part tables.

In looking at Table 29 you'll note that, for each chit combination (and, for the Russians, radio contact number) there are three different "% LOS" entries: 100%, 70% and 40%. These are the probabilities that a scattered shot will fall within the LOS of the Observer. The 100% value was picked for obvious reasons. The 70% value is one that I used in my *COD* article ("First Impressions", Vol. 17, No. 2) and it reflected my feelings concerning a typical game situation at that time. I have since, probably due in no small way to the number of *Deluxe ASL* scenarios I've been playing, concluded that a lower value ought to be included. I choose 40% as the value simply because using it puts the same interval between the numbers.

Let's suppose that you're the U.S. player, sitting somewhere with a view of almost everything, and have a "Plentiful" artillery module. From part (a) of the table, for 100% LOS, you have a 46% chance of getting a FFE in the minimum two player turns and a 74% chance of doing it within three. At the other extreme, consider an early war Russian module with "Scarce" ammunition in a city scenario. At 40% LOS, the corresponding numbers from part (b) of the table are now 7% and 18%. After looking at these numbers and going over my collection of *ASL* scenarios, I'm of the opinion that, unless there's at least a 50% chance of getting a shot off within three player turns, a Russian player should just forget about using an artillery module; it's hard for me to find a situation in which that leader wouldn't be better employed moving or rallying troops.

Part (a), however, offers some other interesting results. Table 28 showed us that, category for category, the British numbers are better than the American ones. We see the same thing here. In both cases, the "Plentiful" U.S. module has less worth than does a British "Normal" one. The thing that struck me was the extent to which these probabilities were insensitive to the ammo supply level. It's quite clear that the thing which *really* matters is the probability that the SR will fall within the Observer's LOS. This will, in general, mean that the Observer will have to be on the move. This will certainly limit his ability to call down fire, which may have a negative effect elsewhere in play. We will see.

In the caption for Table 29, you'll notice that the contact modifier is "-1". If the artillery in question is 76mm-82mm mortars, the modifier is "-2". This too is something we'll be taking a look at the significance of a bit later on.

Average Return on Investment

In Table 30 there are four numbers for each combination of chits (and radio contact number) and number of player turns. Before going into the conditions associated with these four numbers, let me explain the "Number of Player Turns" parameter. These are the same numbers I used back in the *COD* article, and I still feel that they are reasonable characterizations of short-, medium-, and long-term return. The results for five player turns should give us some notion of the quick-strike capability of an artillery module, while the 20-turn results should be an upper bound for most scenarios.

Force	Ammunition Supply					
	Scarce		Normal		Plentiful	
	COD	ASL	COD	ASL	COD	ASL
British	2.8	6.3	3.6	7.7	4.5	7.7
U.S.	4.0	5.7	4.8	6.6	5.6	7.1
German	2.8	5.2	3.6	6.3	4.5	6.6
Russian (early)	1.3	3.8	1.6	4.6	2.2	4.8

Table 31—The Average number of FFEs in 20 turns for 100% LOS, -1 contact number.

Chits (black/red)	# of turns	Number of FFEs											
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
10/3	5	11 15	3 6	61 64	24 15								
	10	8 8	0 0	13 19	3 4	30 37	16 14	31 17					
	20	8 7	0 0	11 12	0 0	10 13	0 1	13 17	1 2	18 19	2 4	20 17	
9/2	5	9 14	3 7	63 62	26 17								
	10	5 7	0 0	14 16	2 5	30 41	16 14	32 18					
	20	5 6	0 0	10 8	0 0	8 12	0 0	10 13	1 2	17 22	3 7	23 21	
9/3	5	15 18	5 8	60 61	21 14								
	10	10 9	0 0	13 19	3 5	35 39	15 10	25 18					
	20	10 8	0 0	10 11	0 0	14 16	0 1	15 16	1 2	14 21	3 4	19 18	
9/4	5	14 22	5 6	64 61	17 12								
	10	11 14	0 1	18 22	2 3	34 37	14 10	21 14					
	20	11 13	0 0	16 16	0 0	18 16	0 1	16 18	0 1	15 18	2 3	14 12	
8/2	5	9 15	5 6	58 63	28 16								
	10	6 8	0 0	10 17	2 3	30 38	15 14	36 20					
	20	6 7	0 0	8 10	0 0	10 11	0 1	11 15	1 2	17 21	3 5	23 20	
8/3	5	13 16	5 7	64 62	19 15								
	10	9 10	0 0	17 19	2 4	34 40	14 11	24 17					
	20	9 9	0 0	13 14	0 0	16 15	0 1	16 19	1 1	17 19	2 4	16 14	
8/4	5	17 22	5 6	62 62	16 10								
	10	13 15	0 0	22 23	2 4	32 37	13 10	19 11					
	20	13 15	0 0	19 16	0 0	17 19	0 1	18 18	0 2	16 17	2 1	11 9	

(a) Values for the British, the U.S. and the Germans.

Chits (black/red)	# of turns	Number of FFEs											
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
6/2 (8)	5	12 19	5 8	62 63	21 11								
	10	8 10	0 1	13 20	2 5	34 40	15 11	28 14					
	20	8 9	0 0	9 12	0 0	14 15	0 0	16 18	1 1	20 24	3 3	20 16	
6/2 (7)	5	18 30	10 10	61 54	10 7								
	10	9 12	0 2	20 30	5 8	43 37	11 6	12 5					
	20	9 10	0 0	12 11	0 1	14 19	0 1	21 26	2 3	25 20	4 3	12 7	
6/2 (6)	5	36 46	12 10	49 42	3 2								
	10	14 19	2 3	38 43	8 7	33 25	3 2	2 1					
	20	10 11	0 0	16 19	0 1	23 26	2 3	27 24	3 3	15 11	2 1	3 1	
5/2 (8)	5	13 17	5 8	63 65	20 10								
	10	8 9	0 1	15 20	2 5	35 42	14 11	26 13					
	20	8 8	0 0	12 13	0 0	16 17	0 1	19 22	0 2	26 24	1 2	18 12	
5/2 (7)	5	21 28	8 12	61 55	10 5								
	10	10 13	1 1	24 33	5 7	41 36	10 5	10 6					
	20	9 10	0 0	15 17	0 1	18 21	0 1	22 24	2 4	22 16	3 2	9 5	
5/2 (6)	5	38 49	11 10	48 39	3 2								
	10	15 23	2 3	38 44	9 5	30 23	3 1	3 1					
	20	11 13	0 0	15 20	1 1	23 30	2 4	30 20	3 2	13 8	2 0	2 1	
5/3 (8)	5	18 24	6 8	63 61	14 7								
	10	15 17	0 1	26 26	3 4	33 36	10 8	14 8					
	20	15 16	0 0	23 21	0 0	22 23	0 0	18 19	0 1	14 15	1 1	8 4	
5/3 (7)	5	24 34	9 11	59 51	8 4								
	10	13 19	1 2	28 34	6 7	38 32	7 4	8 3					
	20	12 16	0 0	20 21	0 0	26 25	0 1	22 22	2 1	14 12	1 1	3 1	
5/3 (6)	5	42 52	11 10	43 37	3 2								
	10	20 27	2 2	44 46	6 5	25 17	2 1	2 1					
	20	16 17	0 0	23 28	1 2	27 28	1 2	22 18	2 1	8 4	0 0	1 1	

(b) Values for the Russians. The value in parentheses is the radio contact number.

Table 32—The probability, for British, U.S. and Russian forces, of obtaining various numbers of FFEs. In each pair of numbers the values are for 100% and 70% LOS, respectively.

Force		British		U.S.		German		Russian	
Number of turns	Modi- fier	none	av	none	av	none	av	none	av
5	-1	15	1.8	15	1.8	16	1.8	28	1.4
	-2	11	1.9	13	1.9	15	1.8	25	1.5
10	-1	8	3.8	8	3.7	10	3.6	13	2.9
	-2	6	4.1	8	3.9	9	3.8	12	3.1
20	-1	7	6.8	7	6.4	9	6.0	10	4.9
	-2	5	7.1	7	6.9	9	6.1	9	5.1

Table 33—The effect of the contact maintenance DR, for 70% LOS, on both the number of games with no FFEs and the average number of FFEs.

For each combination of parameters, the top two numbers refer to the results from the model for Table 29 described earlier. The value on the left is for 100% LOS; the value on the right is for 70% LOS. That pair of values in the second line has the same LOS parameters, but they suppose that upon completion of a Fire Mission, no further effort is made to obtain another mission for two player turns. This means that the leader could move once before attempting to arrange another shot.

For any force except the Russian one, the effects of "Plentiful", "Normal" and "Scarce" supply are obtained by looking at the block of results for "plentiful", then the block directly below it, and finally at the block to the right of the second one. For the Russians, it is simply a matter of reading down from top to bottom in part (b). Look at the American results. Using the "Observer Never Moves" line, the values, in 20 player turns, with 70% LOS are: 6.4, 6.2 and 5.4. That pretty much tells the story. For a given force, the differences to be seen between having "Plentiful" and "Normal" supply are generally quite small. Going from "Normal" to "Scarce" shows more effect. This is but one example of the significance of that extra red chit.

The effects of supply level become smaller if we look at shorter times and the second line of results. For the Americans again, the corresponding 10-turn results, with at least two player turns between shots, are 2.9, 2.8 and 2.7. As we shall be seeing in our look at distributions, the significance of these average values is such that we might play several games in a row in which a "Scarce" artillery module outperforms a "Plentiful" one.

The results of these calculations, as well as some of the others, have convinced me that it is better to attempt fewer shots if that is the price required in order to increase the chances of having a wayward SR land within the Observer's LOS. In particular, we can see in this last table cases in which the turns spent moving will be just about compensated for by having better LOS.

The results for various supply levels have some important implications with regard to DYO scenarios. In general, purchase of "Plentiful" ammunition at a cost of 20% doesn't seem like a good idea for any nationality except, possibly, the Russians late in the war. In general, when on the attack, the chronic Russian leader shortage is a bit less bothersome, and late in the war is when the Russians are likely to be attacking. However, saving 20%, once you've decided to pop for an artillery module, is probably false economy.

This seems like a good place to make a comparison between what the general worth of an artillery module is now, and what it once was. The numbers in Table 31 are a combination of ones from Table 30 for 100% LOS and ones calculated long ago when COD first appeared. Clearly, the Russians are the big winners in terms of overall gain, but the British have done nearly as well on a percentage basis—and they were better to start with. If you hadn't already noticed, artillery in ASL does your boys more damage. (One of the players who wrote to me did so, in part, to express the opinion that the British should come out better than do the Americans; it is safe to say that the designers agree with him.)

The Distribution of Results

It is from distributions such as those shown in Table 32 that the averages discussed in the previous section were obtained. At 1000 runs per case, these are the least reliable results, but I would trust any of them within 3% either way. Remember that the averages get better a lot faster than do the details of the distribution. In this case, what I'd like to point out is well illustrated by the results for 100% LOS, with 8B/3R chits. The probabilities of obtaining zero through five complete Fire Missions (each worth

OBA GUN CALIBER

DRM	80	100	120	150	200+
-3	37.0	37.0	24.1	13.9	6.5
-2	50.9	50.9	37.0	24.1	13.9
-1	65.7	65.7	50.9	37.0	24.1
+0	77.8	77.8	65.7	50.9	37.0
+1	87.0	87.0	77.8	65.7	50.9
+2	93.5	93.5	87.0	77.8	65.7

Table 34—The probability that an AFV will both survive and remain Mobile after an OBA FFE attack.

two FFEs) in 20 turns are 9%, 13%, 16%, 16%, 17% and 16%. While that distribution isn't as flat as that seen in one of my earlier examples, the numbers tell us that we really can't count on, in any given playing, getting anywhere close to the average value. What that means is that your game strategy should not be based upon an expectation of big help from the guns. It may be there, but it might not.

The Russian results show more variation. For example, the 5B/3R module has 20-turn values of 16%, 23%, 22%, 8% and 1%. This is the result of the smaller number of black chits which will, after all, place a ceiling on just how many Fire Missions you can get.

As mentioned earlier, it's easier to maintain contact if you are talking to the local mortar crews. Some idea of what this is worth can be gained from Table 33. The ammunition supplies are all "Normal", except for the U.S. entry (which is "Plentiful"). The Russian values are for the late war. While the differences between the -1 and -2 values are not particularly large, note that the differences are sometimes greater than those due to changes in the ammunition supply level.

Effects on Armor

The effects of HE fire of a given weight upon infantry have already been explored in the early tables in my first ASL article dealing with infantry. However, OBA effects on armor deserve some attention. The way the rules now read, a KIA result kills the AFV, while a K# result (or a roll one greater than that) immobilizes the vehicle if it's a hull hit and automatically Shocks it with a turret hit. A Shock hit will be fatal one-third of the time. The IFT roll is subject to a DRM ranging from -3 (an open-topped vehicle, having all armor factors of less than or equal to "4", parked in the woods) to +2 (a vehicle with all armor factors of greater than or equal to "8" parked next to a wall). Thus, the results in Table 34 provide a complete picture of what can happen.

To pick a specific situation for study, a German PzKpfw IVH out in the open has no modifiers at all. Even so, an 81mm mortar FFE has better than a 20% chance of taking it out of the conflict. That chance more than doubles if the artillery gets a second shot. If you park that tank in the woods, that same ordnance has a better than even chance of causing trouble with two shots. Since there are only three German vehicles that qualify for the +1 modifier due to high armor values, this means that no AFV can afford to ignore artillery fire, even if everything is buttoned up. AFVs are prime OBA targets, especially if you have onboard AT weapons to coordinate with the FFEs. The AFV owner, faced with a choice between stopping in the open, thereby improving the chances of enemy AT fire, or of rolling through another hex of FFE, is not a happy commander. But then, who, being victimized by intelligent play of OBA, is a happy commander? Let's hope that all our opponents fall into that category.

BACK ISSUES

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- 14-3: AIW—H, DN, S, Q; TRC—S; 3R—S; STAL—SR; WAS—V; PB—Sc
 14-5: SL—H, A, DN, Q; WS&IM—A; TRC—S; MD—S; SST—S; 3R—S
 15-2: PL—V, Sc; STAL—V; 3R—V; DD—DN; RB—S; VITP—S
 16-1: AZ—Sc, S, DN; 3R—S; NP—S; PB—SR; 1776—S; DIP—S
 16-2: BIS—A, Sc, H, DN, Q; PB—SR; AK—S; 1776—S; WS&IM—S
 16-4: MR—A, V, DN, Q; COI—S; 3R—S; TRC—SR
 16-6: DUNE—A; DIP—V; OS—V; AZ—DN, Sc, SR; PB—A, PBM
 17-1: W&P—A, DN, V, Q; 3R—S; COI—S; MD—V; COD—A; MR—V; LW—S; WAS—SR
 17-3: AK—S; 3R—S; COD—S, Q; AF—A, DN; TRC—V; VITP—V; COI—SR
 17-4: FE—S, P, DN, V; MD—V, Q; COI—SR; VITP—S; 1776—Sc; WO—A; SST—V; NAP—S
 17-5: CM—S, V, Q; RW—V; SL—V; STAL—V; PL—S; 3R—S, SR; CAE—V; KM—S; MR—S
 17-6: STAL—S; WS&IM—V, Sc; WAS—V; 3R—SR; SL—S; TLD—Q; CL—S; VITP—S; TRC—S
 18-1: FITW—A, Q; BIS—S; SL—S; DUNE—V; DIP—S; AK—A; PB—SR; AL—S; W&P—S
 18-2: AF—A, Sc, Q; AK—V; 3R—DN; TB—V; SL—S, Sc; AIW—V; VITP—S; DIP—S; DD—S
 18-3: GOA—S, DN, V, Q; AOC—V, Sc; AK—S; VITP—V; SL—S, Sc; WS&IM—SR, P; DIP—S
 18-4: GL—H, V, A, Q; SL—Sc, A; LW—V; W&P—SR; AOC—S, P; FE—V; WAS—S; AK—S
 18-5: 3R—S, A, V, DN, Q; SL—S, A, Sc; TRC—V; TB—V; RW—V; CL—A; DUNE—V
 18-6: FT—A, Sc, V, DN; VITP—V, Q; MD—S, Q; SOTN—A, Q; SUB—Sc; BL—V
 19-1: SOA—A, V, DN, SR, Q; TLD—A, Q; 3R—S, Q; DWTK—DN; TB—A
 19-2: BB—H, Sc, S, DN; TLD—A, Q; SL—V; 3R—S; SOA—SR
 19-3: GSL—A, Sc, V, SR, Q; DIP—A; RW—Sc; GE—V; 1776—Sc; LRT—V, Q; SL—A
 19-4: CIV—A, V, DN; CM—V; DIP—A; GL—V; AL—V; TR—Sc; WO—Sc; SLA; 3R—S, Q
 19-5: SON—A, S, H, Q; W&P—S, Q; DIP—A; WAT—V; WS&IM—Sc; SL—A
 19-6: VITP—PBM, SR; 3R—V, Q; DIP—A; FT—V; BIS—V; NW—A; SL—A, Sc; SUB—V, Sc
 20-1: GI—S, A, DN, V, Q; VITP—SR
 20-2: TT—A, DN, S, Q; MR—V; LRH—A; SL—Sc; W&P—V; GOA—S, Q; DIP—A; PL—V
 20-3: FRED—S, V, Sc, Q; PB—A; 1776—Sc; DWTK—S, V, Q; DIP—A; CON—V, S
 20-4: FITG—S, A, Q; SST—PBM, V; AW—A; DUNE—PBM; DIP—A; SL—DN, A, Q; BL—S; KM—V
 20-5: BR—SR, S, H, Q; LRT—S; DIP—A; GSL—Sc; GE—A; WS&IM—Sc; SON—Q
 20-6: B-17—A, V, SR, Q; AF—V; LW—S; DL—S; FE—S; DIP—A; MD—S; BR—SR; GOA—Sc; SL—A; PL—Q
 21-1: UF—S, A, SR, DN, Q; SOA—S; GI—H, S; TRC—S; DD—S
 21-2: NAB—S, DN; W&P—S, A, Q; NAP—S; FR—S; FE—S; 3R—S; BFI—S; 1776—S; SL—A
 21-3: BB—S, SR, Q; 3R—S; SL—A, H; SOTN—V; DIP—A; FRED—S; FE—S, Q; SST—S; TLD—S; PL—Sc; 1776—Q; SOA—Q
 21-4: PGG—S, SR; PB—A; 3R—S; TRC—S, V, Q; DIP—A; STAL—V, S; SL—Sc; PK—Q
 21-5: HW—S, V, A; MR—S, Q; OR—A; DIP—A; 3R—A; RB—S; CON—V; CIV—S; SL—A
 21-6: FP—H, V, SR; AIW—S, Sc; BL—V; TAC—V, Q; SL—A; PK—Q
 22-1: PAA—A, S, Q; TB—A, V; DWTK—DN; TR—V; GSL—PBM; DIP—A; AOC—S; WAS—S, Q; AK—V; CIV—S; 3R—S, Q
 22-2: BANZ—A, SR, Q; FT—A, S; SUB—Sc; VITP—S, Q; AK—Q
 22-3: PB—SR; PL—Sc, V, Q; SOA—S; 3R—V; DIP—A; CIV—A; UF—Sc, Q; AIW—S; GOA—A, Q; TLD—A
 22-4: RF—A, V, S; TRC—V; PK—S, Q; DIP—A; 3R—V; SUB—V; PPG—S
 22-5: DD—S, A, Q; GSL—Sc; BR—S; DIP—PBM, A; SC—V; FITG—A; ASL—Sc, Q
 22-6: ASL—A, Sc, DN, Q; FP—Sc; FE—S, Q; WAS—A; DIP—A; SL—S; TLD—S
 23-1: FL—A, V; DL—V; B-17—V, DN; HW—S, Q; VITP—V; 3R—S; TT—V; LW—V; SST—V; RW—V
 23-2: ASL—A, S, Sc, Q; BV—SR; UF—S; DIP—A; PL—A
 23-3: SUB—V, Sc; ASL—S, Sc; BV—SR; HW—V; BL—V, Q; BB—A
 23-4: EIA—S, DN; W&P—V, S; WS&IM—Sc; SC—V; NAP—S; YS—S; 3R—S, Q
 23-5: KOTA—DN, Sc, Q; WAT—V; B-17—V, Q; 3R—S; RW—V; ASL—S, Sc; VITP—S
 23-6: 1830—DN, S, V, Q; FP—Sc; RB—S; DD—PBM; CIV—S; MR—S
 24-1: ASL—V, S, Sc, Q; SOF—SR; TRC—S; FP—Sc; RF—S, DN; PGG—S





SERIES REPLAY

STREETS OF FIRE, Scenario 1

German Player—Darryl Burk
Russian Player—Bill Conner
Neutral Commentator—Mark C. Nixon



We pick up the account of the battle for GHQ with the fourth turn of Deluxe ASL Scenario 1. While the German plan was disrupted by a sudden swing in the luck last turn, much fighting remains for the outcome still hangs in the balance. Welcome back to the "Death Trap".

Darryl Burk and Bill Conner are both well known faces at the highest levels of ASL competition. They have faced each other so many times that they even have their own names for some of the terrain features—aka, "Death Trap" for building bE1. Mark Nixon, coming back into the fold of writing wargamers after a too-long absence, has been gleefully looking over their shoulders to provide the insightful neutral commentary.

TURN 4

German Player Turn

Serial	Event	DRM	DR	Result
Rally Phase				
223	Wind Change Attempt		6	NE
224	G.H. self-rally		8	Remove DM
225	G.A. with Behr		9	Remove DM
226	G.F. with Behr		11	Remove DM
227	G.G. with Behr		6	Remove DM
228	R.B. with Golikov		9	Rally
Prep Fire Phase				
229	Pils., g.D., G.K. w/LMG opportunity fire			
230	Bauman, G.O. w/MMG, G.P. w/HMG fire on R.E.—36 IFT	+2	7	3MC
231	R.E.—3MC		5	Pinned
232	HMG ROF fires on R.E.—24 IFT	+2	8	1MC
233	R.E.—1MC		3	Pass
234	German Sniper Activation Target Selection 1,4 moves Sniper to dI1		2	Fires
235	Pins R.O.			
236	G.E. fires on Petrakov w/LMG, R.F. w/HMG R.J., C.J.—8/4 IFT	+3	5	NMC/NE
237	Petrakov w/LMG—NMC		7	Pass
238	R.F. w/HMG—NMC	-1	7	Pass
Movement Phase				
239	Behr from bF3 to bF4			
240	g.B. from bD1 (2nd) to bF1 (2nd)			
241	R.B. fires on g.B.—4 IFT	+2	7	NE
242	R.B. final fires on g.B.—2 IFT	+2	3	NMC
243	German Sniper Activation g.B.—NMC		11	Breaks (DM)
245	G.Q. from bC3 to bD2 (1st)			
246	Kalmer, G.L. w/LMG, G.M. w/MMG, G.N., C.T. from bB4 to bB2			
Defensive Fire Phase				
247	R.I. w/LMG fires on Pils., g.D., G.K. w/LMG—8 IFT	+2	6	NMC
248	Pils.—NMC		4	Pass
249	g.D.—NMC	-1	10	Breaks (DM)
250	G.K. w/LMG—NMC		8	Pinned
251	G.A. w/MMG fires on Werth, C.S., G.E.—8/16 IFT	+3	3	1MC/2MC
252	German Sniper Activation Target Selection 5,5 moves Sniper to dI1		1	Fires
253	Breaks R.O.			Breaks (DM)
254	Werth—1MC		12	Wounded
255	Wound Severity		3	Light
256	G.E.—2MC		7	Breaks (DM)
257	R.D. fires on Behr, G.A., G.F., G.G.—4 IFT	+3	10	Cover, NE

258	MMG ROF fires on G.I., R.H.—8 IFT	+1	7	NMC
259	R.H.—NMC		4	Pass
260	G.I.—NMC		6	Pass
261	Russian Sniper Activation		3	NE
Rout Phase				
262	g.B. routs to bD2 (1st)			
263	Werth, G.E. have no rout			KIA
264	g.D. routs to bD2 (1st)			
265	Pils. voluntary routs to bD2 (1st)			
266	G.A., G.F., G.G. rout to bF4			
267	R.O. routs to dI2			
Advance Phase				
268	Kalmer, G.L. w/LMG, G.M. w/MMG, C.T. into bB1			
269	G.N. marked with C.R.			
270	G.N., C.R. into bC2			
271	G.Q. into bD1 (1st)			
272	Bauman, G.O. w/MMG, G.P. w/HMG, C.S. into bC2			
273	Remove C.S.			
Close Combat Phase				
274	German player declares Hand-to-Hand in bG1			
275	G.I. vs. R.H.		4	R.H. KIA
276	R.H. vs. G.I.		7	G.I. KIA

German player places C.S. on Behr; C.X. on Bauman; C.Y. on Pils.

Russian Player Turn

Serial	Event	DRM	DR	Result
Rally Phase				
277	Wind Change Attempt		6	NE
278	Provisional Reinforcements		4	NE
279	Petrakov passes LMG to R.J.			
280	R.O. self-rally		6	Remove DM
281	G.A. with Behr		5	Remove DM
282	G.F. with Behr		4	Rally
283	G.G. with Behr		7	Remove DM
284	g.D. with Pils.	-1	4	Rally
285	G.B. with Pils.	-1	8	Remove DM
Prep Fire Phase				
286	Petrakov, R.F. w/HMG, R.J. w/LMG fires on G.Q.—36 IFT	+2	7	3MC
287	G.Q.—3MC		8	Breaks (DM)
Movement Phase				
288	R.D. assault moves from bF1 (1st) to bE2 (1st)			DM G.B.
289	R.E. assault moves from bE2 to bF2			
290	Pils., g.D. fire on R.E.—2 IFT	+1	11	NE
291	R.I. w/LMG assault moves from dM1 to dL1			
292	R.A. w/MMG from bF0 to bG1			
293	Golikov from dL2 to dJ3			
294	R.B. from dL2 to dL1			
Defensive Fire Phase				
295	Pils., g.D. final fire on R.D.—2 IFT	+2	7	NE
Rout Phase				
296	G.Q. has no rout			KIA
297	G.B. routs to bC4			
298	Pils. voluntary routs to bC4			
Advance Phase				
299	R.I. passes LMG to R.B.			
300	R.I. into dM2			
301	R.B. w/LMG into dM1			
302	Golikov into dJ2			
303	R.D. into bD2 (1st)			
304	R.E. into bF3			DM G.A., G.G., CX R.A.
305	R.A. w/MMG into dI1			
Close Combat Phase				
306	No Ambush in bD1 (1st)			
307	R.D. vs. g.D.		7	g.D. KIA
308	g.D. vs. R.D.		6	NE

German: My attack has shifted northward as building bE1 remains in the hands of the stubborn Russian defenders. The bC1-dM1 approach to GHQ is about

the only choice I have now. Unfortunately, bE1 covers it quite nicely. Although the "Death Trap" will not be the springboard of the final assault as I had hoped, it may still be useful to me as a drain on Russian manpower. "Fish" now has more good order squads than I, not a good situation when you are on the attack.

Prep fire was a futile attempt to correct that imbalance by breaking a few Russian squads, so an attack on bE1 wouldn't have to face some 36 firepower factors. Cpl. Werth and squad E were in a bad spot and probably should have moved. I had considered two alternatives for them, an assault move to bG2 or a bolder move to bG2-bH1-bH0-dM1-dH2 with an advance to dG2. Either alternative would have given broken units a chance to rout. The demise of Cpl. Werth and E would have been acceptable had E's attack on bE1 broken a defender or two.

I had planned to advance E and a concealed Werth against Russian D, which was why I moved the half-squad B to the second level of bF1. Had B survived that awesome 2(+2) attack, he would have joined E in close combat against D.

Kalmer abandoned bB4 even though his was the only position I had to harass Russian reinforcements from, because the assault needs a shot in the arm both manpower and firepower. His group can be put to far better use on the front line than in a position from which they merely inconvenience Bill's reinforcements. The Advance Phase was used to support the thrust through bC1-dM1, but I failed to protect my broken units! What a disaster. My broken squads are now on their own.

Cpl. Werth and E bore the price of their commander's mistakes. Their loss, combined with my six broken units, has me in dire straits. I need a good Rally Phase during the Russian player turn. I had a feeling that time was running out for squad I, so I opted Hand-to-Hand combat in order to take someone with him. The fighting in bG1 was a gamble that just didn't work out.

The end of my player turn leaves the German in questionable shape. I'm only a few hexes from the final objective, but accurate Russian fire has really thinned the ranks. I can't afford to lose any more squads in the Rout Phase but, unfortunately, that's what I've set myself up to suffer. Hurt as they are these Germans are still a force to be reckoned with.

Yes, building bE1 has again lived up to its reputation as the "Death Trap". A few foolish moves on my part have enhanced this mystique. My poor handling of the Rout and Advance Phases during my fourth turn come back to haunt me during Bill's player turn. What a mistake to move Bauman out of bD2 where he covered so many of my broken squads. He would have been much better positioned in bD2 (1st). At least the units which did rally provided a little cover for their broken comrades.

The delay in the arrival of the reinforcements is the only thing keeping me from being totally blown out of this game. With the excellent way "Fish" has handled the troops he already has, I really don't need him getting any more. My only chance is to get some squads into GHQ and cut off those Russians concentrated west of the building.

Russian: Soviet Order of the Red Star is awarded squad E, as he miraculously survives German Prep Fire attacks of 36(+2) and 24(+2), suffering only a Pin in the process. But they missed a chance for even greater glory when I forgot to fire them during Final Fire. Wait till the Commissar hears of this!

Golikov, directing squad B, does hammer the German half-squad with a murderous 2(+2) Subsequent First Fire. It was his only shot; what can I say? Only the MMG fired into the Melee, hoping to cause a little confusion. Werth broke, wounded and dropped in ELR, making him in effect a 5+2. Befitting such a stalwart, he was gunned down in the Rout Phase along with E.

And Kalmer's group left its crow's nest, forfeiting excellent fields of fire, forced to join the attack because of Darryl's lack of front line manpower. Ground level of dM2 and dM1 may now be occupied without fear of Kalmer's 20(-1) firegroup. Hex dM2 is particularly nice, because the enemy must be in either adjacent rubble, open ground or an upper level to have LOS.

During my own turn, support weapon transfers again reduce the risk of their loss. During the Movement Phase, my expendable squad E assault moves into the street to harass enemy units behind the row-house. While this squad was drawing fire, my squad D moved to cut off Darryl's Q's rout. Fearing no death, E advanced to DM enemy A and G squads while D entered bE1 (1st) for close combat, won that, and ended in position to either draw fire from Bauman or take a point-blank Snap Shot (halved twice) as they leave bC2.

Squad A gets out of the gully, takes a quick body count in bG1, and then CXs to advance into dI1. He will make the enemy's Movement Phase miserable (especially G.H.'s should he self-rally). That, unfortunately, will come easier than it should since E earlier forgot to DM him.

I've hurt "Action" Burk badly over the last two turns, killing three squads and a half squad and a leader while losing only one squad myself this turn. Building bE1, which I now control, has again proved to be the core of the resistance. Those D1/E1 wings spell death for broken units. But Darryl is not out of it yet. The bulk of his force is in position to push its way into the GHQ, a move which would cut off the majority of my force. I feel he is forced to take greater risks though, and then hope for some good luck. Stranger things have happened in ASL play.

Neutral Commentator: I liked the flexibility of Darryl's attack. After his third turn advance, he was in bD1-dI1 in strength. This turn he is in bD1-dB1, ready to go at "Fish" again. Unfortunately, in the interim a large portion of his army got pounded.

Notice how a simple thing like Russian squad D not being CX has pronounced impact this turn. Were the players aware that squad D should have been CX, it would not be able to force DM status on bF3 (because he would need "2" to obtain a NMC; said roll would then Cower to the "2" column, where DM with a +4 DRM is impossible). Units in bF3 would then rally on "8" after Behr advances in. Looking ahead, both German squads A and G would have rallied with the roll they make!

But the most surprising event happened in the German Advance Phase when Bauman decided not to go after the pinned Russian in bE2. Admittedly, this would have put a lot on the line, with Bauman facing an adjacent 36(+2) during Russian prep fire, but it would have given Darryl an easy "kill" right now as well as kept the Russian on the east side of the street. Besides, "Action" Burk would have enjoyed a dr modifier advantage in Ambush and may well have destroyed E and skated away from bE1 altogether!

Still, as I said, this would have put a tremendous amount of the German force "on the line", just when he needs them to take up the fight. The point is, putting Bauman anywhere but where he went may

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMENTS

We liked the format used by Messers. Chappell, Blick and Kibler in their replay (*GENERAL*, Vol. 23, Nos. 2-3) so well that we adopted it for this Series Replay with only minor modifications. These, along with some clarifications, are as follows.

1. Whenever we refer to a hex side or vertex, we always designate them as though an Artillery Request counter were in the hex, oriented with the "1" hex side containing the grid coordinate. Vertex #1, then, is the one between "1" and "2"; vertex #2 is between "2" and "3"; and so forth.

2. With the above in mind, we always orient Sniper counters with the "1" side matching the hex side containing the grid coordinates. If you adhere to this rule, you need never worry about perfectly aligning your Sniper counter, and eliminate any player ever questioning the direction it is facing. When the Sniper counter moves to another board, it is simply reoriented properly if necessary. When it lands in a half hex with no grid coordinate, it is oriented as other hexes on that board; or oriented on the lower numbered board if in a whole hex made up of two un-numbered half hexes.

3. Again referring to the above, bypass movement is recorded by referring to the hexside bypassed. For example, "bK5/5-6" means that hex bK5 was bypassed across hexsides "5" and "6".

4. When called upon to show both dice in a result, as with Sniper movement, we recorded the colored die first.

5. We did not use letter designations for events; each has its own number.

6. We did not record actual placement of DM or Residual Fire counters, feeling these are an inherent part of their respective events and would only serve to clutter the notes.

7. Snipers were resolved immediately when rolled, instead of after resolution of the generating event. Don't be surprised when play is interrupted for immediate Sniper activity.

8. Another time saver was our "Random Events" priority. Whenever a Random Event must be rolled for multiple units in a location, we instituted a set priority which eliminated the hassle of designating each die to a certain unit and the inconvenience of a stack suddenly keeling over in the middle of the often frantic behavior we players are all subject to during such excitement.

Our system is simple: predesignate your dice for all time, light to dark, on paper and preferably someplace where this list can be seen during play. Every Random Event takes this priority, light to dark: Hero (alphabetically if multiple heroes); Leader (Commissar first, then by quality and then alphabetically); Squad or HS (by alphabetic designation, then per A25 Chart if duplicated); finally, Crew (by number).

This may seem a lot of trouble during set-up, but once done is set for the game. It truly saves a lot of time when you're playing better than 100 scenarios a year.

EVENT LISTING LEGEND

NE	No Effect
w/	with or possessing
(1st)	First Level
(2nd)	Second Level
G.-	German Squad
R.-	Russian Squad
C.-	Concealment Counter
g.-	German HS
malf	Malfunction

(all other abbreviations are ASL standard.)

RUSSIAN UNITS

Type Unit	Designation
9-1 Leader	Petravkov
7-0 Leader	Golikov
4-5-8	R.A.
4-5-8	R.B.
4-5-8	R.C.
4-5-8	R.D.
4-5-8	R.E.
4-5-8	R.F.
6-2-8	R.G.
6-2-8	R.H.
6-2-8	R.I.
?	C.B.
?	C.C.
?	C.D.
?	C.E.
?	C.G.

GERMAN UNITS

Type Unit	Designation
9-1 Leader	Bauman
8-1 Leader	Kalmer
8-1 Leader	Pils
8-0 Leader	Behr
7-0 Leader	Werth
4-6-7	G.A.
4-6-7	G.B.
4-6-7	G.D.
4-6-7	G.E.
4-6-7	G.F.
4-6-7	G.G.
4-6-7	G.H.
4-6-7	G.I.
4-6-7	G.J.
4-6-7	G.K.
4-6-7	G.L.
4-6-7	G.M.
4-6-7	G.N.
4-6-7	G.O.
4-6-7	G.P.
4-6-7	G.Q.
2-4-7	g.C.
2-4-7	g.CC.

ADDITIONAL UNITS

Type Unit	Designation
8-1 Leader	Petrov
6-2-8	R.J.
6-2-8	R.K.
6-2-8	R.L.
6-2-8	R.M.
6-2-8	R.N.
6-2-8	R.O.

Type Unit	Designation
1-4-9 Hero	Gurewicz
5-2-7	R.H.
?	C.F.
?	C.H.
?	C.I.
?	C.J.
?	C.N.
?	C.O.
?	C.AA.
?	C.BB.
?	C.CC.
?	C.DD.

Type Unit	Designation
1-4-9 Hero	Stein
4-4-7	G.K.
2-3-7	g.K.
2-4-7	g.A.
2-4-7	g.B.
2-4-7	g.D.
4-6-8	G.N.
?	C.R.
?	C.S.
?	C.T.
?	C.X.
?	C.Y.
?	C.Z.

369 Petrakov, R.F. w/HMG, R.J. w/LMG
from bE1 to dL2
370 R.N., C.N. from offboard to dG5
371 Golikov, R.O. from dJ2 to dJ3
372 G.H. fires Snap Shot on Golikov,
R.O. at dJ2/4—2 IFT +1 8 Cover, NE
373 Golikov, R.O. continue to dM3
374 R.E. Dash from bF3 to bF1
375 Pilsl, g.B. fire Snap Shot on R.E.
at bF2/4—1 IFT -1 11 NE

Advance Phase

376 R.B. passes LMG to R.I.
377 R.B. into dM1
378 Golikov, R.O. into dM2
379 R.M., R.L. into dL1
380 Place C.CC on R.M., R.L.
381 R.K. into dM2
382 Place C.BB. on R.K.
383 R.N., C.N. into dF4
384 R.E. into bF1 (1st)

Russian player places C.O. on Petrakov, R.A. w/MMG, R.F. w/HMG,
R.J. w/LMG; C.E. on R.E.; C.BB. on Golikov, Gurewicz, R.I. w/LMG,
R.K., R.O.

German: These Russians are incredibly tough! Level three MCs do nothing but cause a few guys to duck their heads. The Russian squad B's refusal to crumble was especially damaging. When I rolled the 3MC against him, I saw the door to GHQ opening, but reality and a pair of "eyes" slammed that door in my face. I really hate it when my opponent ends up in better shape after I attack him than before that attack. When the Russian sniper broke my only squad in bF4 which could prep fire, it was the icing on the cake. Sgt. Behr didn't attempt a Sniper Check because he didn't want to be TI adjacent to a Russian squad.

Squad H is trying to get into position to harass some reinforcements or even perhaps encircle some Russians. Squad N assault moved to bC1 to set up an ambush in close combat, and my half-squad moved in to support him. I must clear dM1, even if it means risking a unit or two in CC; I'll never get into the GHQ otherwise. Sgt. Pilsl and my B attempted, in vain, to draw some fire away from Bauman; I was amazed when they made it to bD2. Their success in close combat was even more amazing, and helps to take some of the heat off bC1.

With the end of the game rapidly approaching, my attitude for the Advance Phase is that if shooting at these Russians is having no effect then it is time for bayonet and rifle butt. Had the combat in dM1 turned out as well as Pilsl's effort, the scenario would not look so rosy for "Fish" as it now does. But Bill always puts his best into every scenario playing. This is what makes him as tough an opponent as he is. His best is excellent, and even his worst is still very good.

The close combat defeat in dM1 may truly have spelled the end for me. Once again I put everything on the line, and once again got hurt. It's not so much the loss of a squad and freshly-created Hero that hurt so bad, as the failure to eliminate the Russian squad and newly-created Hero. Any other result in this close combat would have been to my advantage. The need to eliminate Russians is why I continue to opt for "Hand-to-Hand" combat.

And the Russian reinforcements couldn't have arrived at a worst time for me. I wanted to be in GHQ before them, but the ferocious Russian defense prevented that. The Russian Rally Phase was a morale booster for me. It's always encouraging to have your troops rally when the chips are down. I'm not beaten yet, and there is enough time left to get Behr and his comrades into the fight just when I need them most. Every squad I can muster has to be in position to enter GHQ by the end of the next turn. The half-squads will be used for cannon-fodder, regrettable but necessary.

The situation going into the Russian player turn would have been much worse had "Fish" chosen to attack the last vestiges of my assault force instead of falling back, although falling back was the safer move and probably the smarter one as well. I can bring a lot of firepower to bear on the front line defense of GHQ, but firepower alone has yet

to prove the answer. Broken, elite squads in a stone building with a Commissar tend to return to action rather quickly. I always take a Commissar if given the chance; they do a wonderful job of instilling life into broken units.

The final assault on GHQ is going to be extremely tough. My main hope is that his dice coll off a bit; they're starting to glow from the heat of his luck.

Russian: I love this game! The dice cause some really weird events. "Action" Burk would have been better off had he not even attacked this turn. It's hard to believe.

Compared with shooting up Bauman, Pilsl and his boys were chump change, so I didn't fire at them as they crossed the street. Darryl knows that he must make things happen, and nearly does with a Hero rising to the occasion while his buddies battle-harden, only all to die in close combat. Losing those newly inflamed veterans while mine survived was the worst possible outcome for Darryl. Had the results here been reversed and followed by a bad reinforcements die roll, the entire game could have turned around. At least "Action" would have regained the initiative. But it just didn't happen that way.

Unfortunately for the German, the reinforcements have arrived with "fearless Leader" directing a platoon, at gunpoint, into GHQ. A lone squad moves on to deal with enemy squad H on the south flank. Petrakov's boys might have been able to finish off Darryl by smashing Bauman in my Prep Fire Phase,

but instead I used the more conservative low risk/low gain approach and move them safely to dI1. Petrakov joins squad A in "safe" dI, covering not only the rubble in dM2 but also the area south of it.

My Fanatic B and Gurewicz return to GHQ for further orders and to wash the blood off their hands. Squad B then returns to the rubble to prevent enemy entrance until the next Advance Phase. This allows a German rush of GHQ only through my open ground "killing zones". Petrov keeps his eye, and his Ppsh 41, on the guys in GHQ. (Can you imagine the balance provision in effect; all these guys would be in a fortified building!)

It seems that the timely arrival of reinforcements has just about finished off all hope of victory for "Action" Burk, although he still has a remote chance—like a sniper attack against one of my three stacks.

Neutral Commentator: Darryl won the "manic screaming rights" with his Prep Fire Phase this turn. He shot off 36(+2), a 16(+2) and a 24(+2) attacks and pinned only one enemy squad, gave his opponent a Hero and a fanatic squad, and brought the sniper down on bF4 to break his only good order squad in that location! One word describes how Darryl feels about all this . . . and it's unprintable.

Bill's squads in bF3 and bD2 are in extremely powerful positions at the start of this fifth turn. The German force in bB1 and bC2 is not encircled, but

Figure 4: The situation at the end of the Russian player turn of Turn 5.



is surrounded by Russian fire. Nevertheless, the German Movement Phase brought Darryl some hope as squad H got around the south end, N battle-hardened and called up Stein from the outskirts of Toledo. Unfortunately, close combat erased these gains despite a German victory on the first level of bD2.

I was surprised that Darryl went into bD1 with so much. I am getting the impression that he may be afraid the attack is winding down and is trying to force something "big" to happen. I couldn't agree more, but would send this help through bC1 instead. Finally, Burk's decision to engage in hand-to-hand combat in dM1 does not fit with his need to tie up these enemy units. If locking them in Melee would have been satisfactory, he should never have opted for the higher casualties of Hand-to-Hand. Instead, I believe he saw a chance to at least trade Hero for Hero and squad for squad, which would have been much to his advantage. Clearing dM1 was what he wanted, so he could use Kalmer to dare Russian squad I forward. It simply backfired. Again, German attempts to enter Board d prove unfortunate. The close combat in dM1 is a tell-tale sign of the last German offensive push beginning to unravel.

In his own turn, "Fish" again pulls back to allow the enemy to do the dirty work and break himself upon the near invincible Russian defense. "Action" Burk needs a really big turn. GHQ itself is very tough. The Fanatic squad up front in dM1 stands a fair chance of holding off the entire German assault singlehanded this turn.

TURN 6

German Player Turn

Serial	Event	DRM	DR	Result
Rally Phase				
385	Wind Change Attempt		6	NE
386	G.G. with Behr		8	Rally
Prep Fire Phase				
387	Kalmer, G.L. w/LMG, G.M. w/MMG fire on R.B.—32 IFT	+2	7	2MC
388	R.B.—2MC		7	Pinned
389	Bauman, G.O. w/MMG, G.P. w/HMG fire on R.B.—20 IFT	+2	10	PTC
Movement Phase				
390	Behr, G.F., G.A., G.G. use CX movement from bH4 to bD4			
391	R.E. fires on Behr, G.F., G.A., G.G.—4 IFT	+2	3	1MC
392	German Sniper Activation		3	NE
393	Behr—1MC		6	Pass
394	Russian Sniper Activation		3	NE
395	G.A.—1MC		7	Breaks (DM)
396	G.F.—1MC		6	Pinned
397	Russian Sniper Activation		5	NE
398	G.G.—1MC		4	Pass
399	Behr, G.G. continue to bC3			
400	Pils, G.B. assault move from bD2 (1st) to bE2 (1st)			
401	G.H. use CX movement from dE3 to dF3			
402	R.N. fires on G.H.—12 IFT	2	8	2MC
403	G.N.—2MC		4	Pass
404	Petrakov, R.A. w/MMG, R.F. w/HMG, R.J. w/LMG fires on G.H.—20 IFT	-3	10	2MC
405	G.H.—2MC		7	Breaks (DM)
Defensive Fire Phase				
406	R.B. fires on Kalmer, G.K. w/LMG, G.L. w/LMG, G.M. w/MMG—4 IFT	+2	10	NE
407	R.L., R.M. fire on Bauman, G.O. w/MMG, G.P. w/HMG—12 IFT	+3	7	PTC
408	Bauman—PTC		6	Pass
409	Russian Sniper Activation Target Selection 5.6 moves Sniper to bD4		1	Fires
410	Random DR selects G.A.			Casualty
4-6-7 G.A. replaced with 2-4-7 G.A. (DM).				
411	G.P. w/HMG—PTC		9	Pinned
412	G.O. w/MMG—PTC		12	Pinned
413	R.E. fires on Pils, G.B.—4 IFT	+3	8	NE
414	R.N. fires on G.H.—6 IFT		12	Cover, NE
Advancing Fire Phase				
415	Pils, G.B. fires on R.E.—2 IFT	+2	12	NE
Rout Phase				
416	G.H. routs to dD2			
417	Interdiction claimed		6	Pass

418 G.H. continues to dB1
 419 G.A. routs to bB4
 420 R.B. voluntary break and rout to dD2
Advance Phase
 421 Pils, G.B. into bF1
 422 Kalmer, G.K. w/LMG, G.L. w/LMG, G.M. w/MMG into dM1
 423 Behr, G.G. into bC2
Close Combat Phase
 424 Russian Ambush in bF1
 425 R.F. vs. Pils, G.B.

German player places C.R. on Behr, G.G.

Russian Player Turn

Serial	Event	DRM	DR	Result
Rally Phase				
426	Wind Change Attempt		4	NE
427	R.B. self-rally		6	Rally
Prep Fire Phase				
428	Golikov, Gurewicz, R.I. w/LMG, R.K., R.O. fire on Kalmer, G.K. w/LMG, G.L. w/LMG, G.M. w/MMG—36 IFT	+2	7	3MC
429	Kalmer—3MC		11	Breaks (DM)
430	G.K. w/LMG—3MC		7	Breaks (DM)
431	G.L. w/LMG—3MC		8	Breaks (DM)
432	G.M. w/MMG—3MC		7	Breaks (DM)
433	German command admits defeat			

German: I have to gain control of dM1 this turn to have any chance to push into GHQ next turn. The continued failure of my huge firepower attacks to score good results is not helping my cause in the slightest. However, the prospect of Sgt. Behr bringing fresh troops into the fray ward off any discouragement due to poor marksmanship on my part.

The euphoria of prospective reinforcements was short-lived however, as squad D demonstrated that movement (even in a stone building) is not always as safe as might be desired. With two squads stranded in bD4, Sgt. Behr's infusion of fresh manpower becomes rather anemic. A better move for Behr would have been to go to bD3, where he could advance to bD4 to rally squad A and provide F enough movement factors to get into GHQ without becoming CX.

Sgt. Pils and half-squad B were sent to keep his E occupied so it couldn't deliver flanking fire into my assault force. Squad H had no choice but to bravely march into the deadly fire. He could be of use only by getting closer to, or into, GHQ. His goal was dJ3, with an advance into dK3 planned—but I wasn't counting on him reaching it. I had to advance into dM1 in force. There is neither time nor room for any subtle moves now. I was hoping Sgt. Pils would eliminate or tie down Russian E, but it wasn't meant to be.

The last hopes that I had of getting into GHQ disappeared in the hail of lead that cut down Kalmer's group. I've no chance to get things organized to push into the building now, even if "Fish" left my units alone to rally in peace. There is really no option now but to concede.

Russian: My fanatic B, having accomplished his mission to deny Movement Phase entry of the rubble in dM2, voluntarily broke and routed back to his Commissar. A dice roll of "11" or less will be good enough to bring him back as the Commissar nullifies DM and raises his morale by another one. This is one way to make Communism worthwhile (at least when using elite troops) for otherwise, as in many *SOF* scenarios, broken squads equal dead squads.

My squad E adds insult to injury by ambushing Pils and his boys, wiping them out, then using Ambush Withdrawal to go downstairs. He could have used the withdrawal before attacking, but I was hoping to lock the enemy in Melee. Eliminating them was just a bonus.

And, as my last action, I simply took my best shot. I can't help but agree with Darryl—his situation looks hopeless.

Neutral Commentator: Darryl makes the anticipated rush by squads F, A, G and H. But the turn was lost when Kalmer and Bauman couldn't subdue the fanatics in hex dM1. Kalmer ends this turn adjacent to the GHQ, and Petrakov is in dI1 (somewhat out of the picture); but nobody can really expect Kalmer to kick these Russians out of the building alone.

"Fish", playing conservative to the extreme now, ensures that the fanatic B squad will not be blown away by routing him into the GHQ. This is "heads-up" play. It would be easy to relax at this point, in an apparently "won" situation. Instead, Bill gets B out of danger and puts him where, once rallied, he helps fulfill the victory conditions.

This same logic justifies "Action" Burk's persistence in an engagement where many commanders might have called it quits. These are veterans; they know that anything can happen. Darryl can still try to throw every squad into GHQ. It might not be pretty, but it might work! Too bad that the luck still seems to elude Darryl. The Russian Prep Fire puts paid to all his plans.

CLOSING COMMENTS

German: I feel that my attack failed for two reasons, only one of which I had control over.

Reason 1: The Russian units held tough against the fiercest attacks I could muster, shrugging off 3MCs and delivering accurate attacks that tore up the assault again and again. There is not much to do about "hot" dice though and I could have weathered that storm if it had not been for the second reason for my defeat.

Reason 2: Much more important to the outcome than the reason above was my squad losses due to failure to rout and my failure to provide covering fire for broken units. "Fish" did an excellent job taking advantage of my poor handling of broken units. The squads lost because this ineptitude could easily have turned the tide in my favor. I've said before that "Fish" readily takes advantage of an opponent's mistakes, and this was a very good example of that skill of his.

All in all, I was pleased with my plan of attack. I stuck to it and it seemed to be working, at least in the early stages. As it was, I nearly made it; a few different dice rolls in the Close Combat Phase could have resulted in an even closer game. It was a "good" loss, and playing the scenario remained as enjoyable this eighth time as it was the first.

Russian: I feel Darryl played an excellent game and lost, not so much because my play was better (because it wasn't), but because of the old adage that "all dice rolls are not created equal". I rolled nearly as many "3's" as "7's", and it seemed I always got the right dice at the right time. Only one of my squads suffered ELR reduction—a major miracle for the Russians—and even that was negated by his eventual battle-hardening!

With the dice in my favor, I was able to stick to my plan. To illustrate, consider the fact that Darryl's large firegroups eliminated only one squad (and that was a berserker). My other three losses were all in close combat. Thus, "Action" Burk's firepower superiority may have forced me to do some things I otherwise might have avoided, but it did not inflict much lasting damage on my positions.

I feel that I was fortunate enough to avoid trouble even when I left myself open for a counterblow. In the Russian half of Turn 2, I ended with a two-hex defense in bF0/bE1 due to congestion in and around bE1 during the Movement Phase. This invited the assault Darryl made in his next player turn's Advance Phase, when he put my Russians to the ultimate test. This very nearly cost me the scenario, while Darryl risked only the loss of the initiative. He still would hold solid ground with plenty of time to recover for the final attack on GHQ if it failed. But my luck held.

TABLE 1:
DR Summary

DR	IFT	GERMAN MC/PTC	TOTAL	DR	IFT	RUSSIAN MC/PTC	TOTAL
2	0	1	1	2	0	2	2
3	1	2	3	3	7	1	8
4	2	4	6	4	3	1	4
5	6	2	8	5	2	4	6
6	1	7	8	6	3	3	6
7	10	10	20	7	8	3	11
8	5	5	10	8	4	1	5
9	4	1	5	9	2	3	5
10	2	4	6	10	6	0	6
11	4	2	6	11	0	0	0
12	1	2	3	12	2	0	0

TABLE 2:
DR Percentages

Type	Turns	GERMAN		RUSSIAN	
		Number	Average	Number	Average
IFT	1-3	20	7.25	16	6.50
	4-6	16	7.75	21	7.00
	Total	36	7.47	37	6.78
MC and PTC	1-3	12	7.58	10	6.50
	4-6	29	6.89	8	5.00
	Total	41	7.09	18	5.83
Rally	1-3	7	8.57	8	6.50
	4-6	17	6.64	5	7.20
	Total	24	7.20	13	6.77
CC	Total	6	5.16	6	6.50
TOTALS		107	7.14	74	6.50

TABLE 3:
Sniper Summary

Nationality	Turn	dr	Effect
German	German 1st	3	—
German	German 1st	6	—
Russian	German 2nd	1	Broken 4-6-7 Casualty Reduction
German	Russian 3rd	6	—
German	German 4th	2	Pins 6-2-8
German	German 4th	3	—
German	German 4th	1	Breaks 6-2-8
Russian	German 4th	3	—
Russian	German 5th	1	Breaks 4-6-7
German	German 5th	5	—
Russian	German 5th	5	—
German	German 6th	3	—
Russian	German 6th	3	—
Russian	German 6th	3	—
Russian	German 6th	1	Breaks 2-4-7

Of 55 rolls, Russian Player rolled "3" eight times; of 77 rolls, German Player rolled "6" eight times (the eighth during Rout and not subject to Sniper attack). The Russian Player had an average roll of 2.4 with three results—breaking one squad and one half-squad, and reducing one squad to a half-squad. The German Player had an average roll of 3.6 with two results—pinning and breaking the same squad in the same phase.

TABLE 4:
Status at Conclusion of Play

GERMAN			RUSSIAN	
Leaders	Squads		Leaders	Squads
2	4	Good Order	3	11
1	4	Broken	0	0
2	9	KIA	0	4

All SW possessed and in working order; one Russian Hero in play.

On the other hand, Darryl seemed to pay for even his smallest mistakes, due both to the mechanics of the game as well as my own efforts to do him in. Anyone interested in pursuing what might have happened in this scenario might consider setting up the positions at the beginning of my third turn and proceeding from there.

Neutral Commentator: *I don't think Darryl made any glaring mistakes, certainly none which single-handedly cost him the game. He did a fine job developing his attack in a deliberate manner and stuck with his plan to grind forward. That he was unsuccessful in his attempts to chew up the Russians in the process is testimony to the excellent performance turned in by "Fish", and an unfortunate exchange of dice rolls on his large fire attacks. Throughout these pages I have sung ample praise of Bill's play, and now I would like to illustrate what I mean about the luck.*

Tables 1 and 2 graphically display the range of luck both players encountered. I present this merely for the information of the readers; you can draw what conclusions from it you will. I wish only to mention the disparate numbers of "2" and "3" rolls as compared with "11" and "12" DR made by our two antagonists. Also worth noting is Darryl's Turn 4-6 IFT attack average of 7.75 as opposed by Bill's Turn 4-6 MC and PTC average of 5.00! Many comparisons of this sort might be added here; suffice it to say that "Action" Burk suffered tremendously at the hands of Lady Luck.

None of which is to say that the game was decided by the dice. Games decided by dice alone I play with my four-year-old. (Yes, she usually wins.) Instead, "Action" Burk and "Fish" Conner responded well to the type of luck they encountered. Bill invested his increasing strength ratio to generate an imposing defense, while Darryl correctly redoubled his efforts to march into GHQ—even from an alternate direction when his primary avenue was blocked. This confrontation was at least classy, if not "classic".

Darryl took "Fish" directly to the wire with his assault on the "Death Trap". By the third turn, it looked as though he were about to smash the Russians in that building and put "Fish" so far down he could never hope to recover. Had Bill's Prep Fire failed him, I believe that's what would have happened. Even after that initial assault was crushed, the German still came on, first squelching a Russian counterattack and then moving on GHQ with the balance of his forces. "Fish" never tried another counterattack after his abortive one in Turn 3, although that brief resistance did win him control of Darryl's broken squads during the middle game.

Darryl's self-assessment of his troubles with broken units, though harsh, seems accurate to me. He did leave a lot of holes, and "Fish" was quick to take advantage of them.

For his part, Bill played a gutsy "hide-n-seek" style defense, showing his troops in force only three times: during his third turn Prep Fire when he burned Darryl, later in the same turn when he himself was burned in the Close Combat Phase, and during his goal line stand at GHQ where he enjoyed outstanding superiority in force. I think "Fish" hit on the best defense for this situation. It obviously paid off this time against "Action". He protected his troops, made few mistakes, and rolled better dice. This combination always brings victory.

Table 3 lists Sniper activity which, despite five effective shots, did not contribute much to the outcome of the scenario. However, once again, "Fish" definitely held the advantage here.

Finally, Table 4 itemizes the infantry status at the end of the play. This table is proof that the German player was at the end of his tether. Indeed, it suggests a Russian counterattack could sweep him from the board. There can be no doubt that both sides gave it all they had.



Squad Leader Clinic

THE 1987 ASL TOURNAMENT

By Joseph Suchar

The ASL ORIGINS '87 tournament was a very special event for me. Thirty-two players began the five-round, single elimination tournament on the morning of 3 July, and the final four finished the fifth round the next day. The fireworks display put on by the city of Baltimore on the evening of the 4th was, for me, an anticlimax after watching the play in the final two rounds.

The result of our effort are the four scenarios which follow. The design criteria we (Jon Mishcon and I) adopted were quite simple: they should use one mapboard and a maximum of 25 counters per side; they should be six turns long; and most important of all, they must all be balanced. As a special touch, we designed them around a specific theme—the role of superior leadership in battle. With the exception of ASL Scenario T2, for which two mapboards were necessary, I believe we successfully accomplished these goals.

What made the tournament special for me was the lesson in humility I was given. This lesson was delivered by what I consider to be an absolutely dazzling level of play in the last two rounds. It was, quite frankly, an advanced seminar on "How to Play ASL like a Pro".

The scenarios were played in numerical order, with Scenario T1 being used again in the final round. The first playing of T1 resulted in ten American and six German wins; T2 saw five Russian and three German victories; the results of T3 was even with two American and two German wins, as was T4's results with one German and one Russian. Round 5 opened with Andrea Cantatore and Eric Baker playing for the first and second positions and Mark Nixon and Pat Jonke going against each other for

third and fourth. Andy had won as the American in the first round while Eric had won as the German. Similarly, Pat had been triumphant as the American player and Mark as the German. The players were required to switch sides for this playoff. Both games were nail-biters, going down to the final phase of the final turn with the outcome decided on the final dice rolls. When the smoke had settled, Andrea Cantatore finished in first place, with Eric, Mark and Pat following in order of finish.

During the course of play there were the usual extreme events we veteran players of ASL have come to take for granted—berserk units, hero creation, rates of fire sustained for many consecutive rolls, broken guns and all the rest. There were several "occurrences" that I have never witnessed, one of which I feel compelled to relate to the readers. At a crucial point in one scenario, the 10-3 leader was captured by the Germans—a devastating blow! But two turns later, a sniper shot wounded the guarding squad, thus enabling the leader to get free and reappear intact in the German rear. That reincarnated leader ultimately became the margin of victory for the American player, once again demonstrating that "It ain't over till the fat lady sings."

At this point, a discussion of the scenarios is in order, with some suggested setups and lines of play. To recreate the feel of the tournament, you should read no further, find an opponent, give yourself four hours to play each scenario, and play from the start. Only then should you turn to the discussion that follows. A major caveat—what follows is in no way a representation of "optimal" play; rather this is just a general set of tactical guidelines.

SCENARIO T1—Gavin Take

AMERICAN: There are three basic openings for you. First, a dual flanking move—Ostberg with three squads moving to D3-G8-N10 in the first three turns, the fourth squad following as quickly as it can; Gavin-Mahoney moving straight down the road Y1-Y5 (if not covered by fire) or behind the hedge line to the east of the road. Both of these routes can be interdicted by fire and smoke will be necessary to mitigate the negative modifiers. Mahoney and three squads should be used for smoke laying while Gavin and the remaining squads move as deeply as possible. Your goal is V10 by the end of Turn 2 with luck.

Second possible opening for you is a flanking move by Ostberg while the Gavin force moves aggressively to occupy T1-U2 at the end of the Advance Phase of Turn 1; you will be trying to provoke a firefight or force the Germans to pull back. The third option is a concerted drive by both forces through the center using your superior firepower and leadership to bull your way through.

Whichever option you use, your forward motion must be relentless. There are only six turns at your disposal, and you must have at least three squads and two leaders in position for the final dash by Turn 5. Remember to leave a covering force behind since the German player moves last and can therefore exit his troops, modifying the Victory Conditions.

Finally, don't forget how potent the 10-3 leader is for rally. A broken 7-4-7 in cover with the 10-3 while under DM will rally on an "8" or less (a probability of 72%). There is nothing more disconcert-



ing for the German player than to see a stack in a forward position crunched, only to reappear the very next Rally Phase.

GERMAN: Not much choice for you; you need to set up in forward positions in an attempt to inflict maximum delay. In the first level S3, put the 9-1 leader, a 4-6-7 squad and MMG. In R3 (first level), put an 8-1 leader and 4-6-7 squad and MMG. The remaining squads and LMGs should consider occupying O5, T3, T4 and/or P4. Important fall-back positions to consider are the first levels of R6 (which interdicts W10, V9, U9 and Q10) and R5 (which interdicts T8 and U10). Finally, Q7 should be the destination for your MMGs and three squads if possible; a firelane from here to Q10 can be effective. One final nasty tactic is to start a 4-4-7 in hex Q7 and on Turn 1 move it to Q10. On the second and third turns, attempt to entrench it. If successful, the American players will have a real problem. Even if you break in the hex, he will have to move adjacent to force a rout, costing him an additional turn. The trade-off through is one less squad to face an already superior enemy force. (As a final consideration, I saw no one use this tactic during the tournament.)

SCENARIO T2—The Puma Prowls

Before I review the two sides, a few remarks on dice probabilities may be in order. While the outcome of a die roll is beyond our control, it is important to know what the chances are for a particular outcome to occur. I believe this is crucial to good play in any game. The very first thing we did when we started playing *SL* was to produce a set of probability tables to aid us in making decisions. After *COI* was introduced, Bob Medrow wrote an excellent article in which tables of the type to which I refer were presented (The *GENERAL*, Vol. 15, No. 6). The TH/TK table on Page 7 of that article is pertinent here. For new players, I highly recommend this article. Careful study of these tables will, I believe, enhance your play. A rational basis for making decisions is, in the long run, more productive than relying on "instinct". Let us see how we might conduct our play in this scenario using a knowledge of the appropriate probabilities.

To keep things simple, I will ignore penetration modifiers. Hence, we will look at ranges of three to 18 hexes inclusive. We will also ignore leader modifiers and APCR. From three to six hexes inclusive, the German TH# is "10", but the Russian here is a small target for a net TH# of "9". The 50L has a TK# of "13" and the Russian frontal armor of the T-70 is "6". Assume that the German firing is CE and we can see that we need a roll of "9" or less followed by a roll of "7" or less to score—yielding a 48% chance of success. The Russian TH# is "9" (he must be buttoned-up to fire, remember) with a TK# of "10" against a frontal armor of "4". Hence the Russian player must roll "9" or less and then "6" or less to have an effect, or a 35% chance of success.

If we extend the range to the 7-12 hex spread, under the same conditions we have a German success rate of 42% while the Russian rate drops to 24%. At a range of 13-18, the German has a success rate of 34%; the Russian, 18%.

If these observations are significant to you, a detailed analysis with all pertinent factors included will be necessary. If you find this approach too detailed or "mathematical" and would rather ignore it, then continue as before. The beauty of *ASL* is the multiple levels at which it can be played and enjoyed.

GERMAN: You are outnumbered and a draw is a Russian win, so you must kill to win. As the previous paragraphs show, you have the edge in kill capability and your leader enhances that. A ROF of "2" will compensate for having fewer vehicles (if four tanks fire, the probability is 80% that at least

one of them will shoot again). The 33 MF allowance gives you better mobility, and when used with your ROF, bounding fire can be potent. A first move to 4K3, 4J3, 4I1 and 4I2 will keep you concentrated with the opportunity to respond to the Russian's second move, which will be critical. The player who scores first will have an enormous advantage. If the enemy splits his force and allows you the opportunity to bring multiple fire on an isolated unit, take it; a quick kill will give you the initiative. No further moves can be suggested here, since you will have to react to his opening initiative. Don't forget about APCR; I recommend you use it immediately as you will want that first kill.

RUSSIAN: Your major disadvantages are slow turret traverse, the need to be buttoned up to shoot, and an inferior kill capability. This is offset by the 10-2 leader, one more vehicle, a better APCR number, and the need for the German to come to you. Your opening move is fixed: enter CE and put the lead vehicle on EE5 with the others behind. The cautious second move will be move CE to Q2-T2-Y2. The exact hexes will be determined by the German position and the range of his reach on his next move. All tanks should be stopped now, with turrets aligned to anticipate the most likely threats. Your leader should be in one of the middle AFVs to avoid being picked off on an opening shot. The many buildings and flat terrain will make long-range shooting difficult for the Germans, forcing him to close on your units—which diminishes his kill superiority. Your next move will be determined by the aggressiveness of the German's second move.

SCENARIO T3—Ranger Stronghold

AMERICAN: Your primary goal is to prevent a rapid German move forward. You are outnumbered and outgunned, hence you must prevent the German from closing with you as long as possible as well. The 10-3 leader is your major asset, and will be the linchpin of your last stand.

A suggested setup for the American player is to put a 7-4-7 and bazooka in O7; the 8-0 in N6; another 7-4-7 and bazooka in O1; another 7-4-7 and bazooka in M3; a lone 7-4-7 in N3; and all remaining units in J4. The unit in O7 covers the gap at S8, while J4 and O1 cover V1-T2. The hexes at O7 and J4 can be brought under fire in the Prep Fire Phase from Hill 538. In fact, the fire can be severe if the German player chooses to use his vehicles and MGs from those positions. But every unit that shot has just lost a precious turn of movement, and that is—after all—your goal.

The American first turn orders are to fall back. From J4, go to the treeline L0-J1 to cover the road and heights. The unit in O7 (if unbroken) goes to J6 or L3; otherwise, it tries to rally in N6. The 7-4-7 in O1 stands if unbroken; those in M3 and N3 try to entrench.

The suggested last stand will take place in the L0-J0 woodland. Notice that units in J0 can be seen from a maximum distance of only four hexes. Try to have at least two squads, an MMG, two bazookas and the 10-3 leader here. The leader modified BAZ will intimidate any tank that tries to bring you under fire. Remember, you can't prevent the German advance; you just want to delay it.

GERMAN: The primary goal for the German is envelopment and destruction of the American force, rather than just pushing him out of the VC zone. The enemy moves last and a last-turn rush could find an unbroken unit in the area, resulting in an American victory. Notice that an unbroken leader is sufficient to win. Unless the American player has exposed a majority of his force to fire, I would recommend against any Prep Fire and aim instead for maximum penetration.

I like the following set-up: 7-0, three 4-4-7 with two LMGs in W10; a tank in W8; the 8-1 and three 4-6-7s at W6; the 9-2 and three more with a LMG

and a MMG in W4; finally, 8-0 leader with three 4-4-7 squads, two LMGs and a panzer in W1. The force in W10 moves under cover to S9 and advances to R8/R9. The ones in W6 moves CX to R6 and advances to Q7. Those men in W4 move CX to Q5 and advance to P4/P5; while the units in W1, under cover of the tank, move to T2. Lack of interdicting fire and/or boldness on your part will determine the depth of your advance. You want to try to get as deep as possible as soon as possible. The units in W10 and W8 are to penetrate rather than fight, with their goal being H3/I4 by Turn 3 or 4. The two center groups can bring fire down from the heights, while the flanking groups move forward as fast as feasible. By Turn 4, the American force should be enveloped. On Turn 5, a concerted rush from all sides should be launched. If the majority of your forces reached their position for this, you have an excellent chance of annihilating the American.

SCENARIO T4—Shklov's Labors Lost

RUSSIAN: Your most important decision is how far forward to set up your forces. I will suggest a conservative rear area placement—2-4-8 and ATR in T7; two 4-5-8, MMG and 10-0 in P5; 4-5-8 in P4; two 4-5-8, LMG and HMG with 10-3 in P3; a 4-5-8 in O2 and another in P8. This set-up will make a German flank advance risky and will also allow most of your units to be concealed. It does allow, though, a safe advance for the enemy through the center; but when he advances into firing range, you will be concealed. On the first turn you can assault move where possible out of LOS and then advance back to your original hex (e.g., units in P3 assault move to Q4 and then advance back to P3). This tactic forces the German player to prep fire on Turn 2, thus denying the firing units a chance to move. And since you are still concealed your chances of surviving are improved. The object here is to preserve your forces as long as possible. Inevitably though, this scenario will become a slugfest. Your final stand will likely be made in building P3 since it offers good access to the upper levels. Try to have the 10-0 commissar in the same stack as the 10-3 leader to obtain maximum morale advantages. The ATR in the rear will make it risky for the Germans to deploy their armor behind your main force in P3 since any attempt to come around will usually offer a rear shot to you. Do not overlook the possibility for a frontal immobilization shot if offered. If immobilization is your main goal, then stack the ATR with the 10-3 to gain the TH modification.

GERMAN: Your set-up will be determined by what the Russian gives you in his. If he sets up the majority of his forces forward, use your superior firepower to smash as much as possible. If he uses a rear set-up, move as far forward as possible without incurring defensive fire, using your Advance Phase to move into firing positions for Turn 2. The heart of your maneuver/fire group will be two stacks: 10-3, three 4-6-8s, two MMGs and a LMG; 9-2, three 4-6-8s and three LMGs. The remainder of your infantry should threaten the flanks as best as possible. The armor should aim for the rear along both flanks, striving for maximum penetration. By Turn 3, you should be able to bring in encircling fire. Don't overlook the use of your vehicles to fire smoke to aid in crossing open ground. While the ATR should be treated with respect, you cannot allow it to prohibit your movement. Remember, the vehicles are most effectively used in the Russian's rear.

Scenario T1—50/50

Scenario T2—55 pro-German

Scenario T3—55 pro-American

Scenario T4—60 pro-German



CONVENTION CALENDAR

The *GENERAL* will list any gaming convention in this space free of charge on a space available basis provided that we are notified at least four months in advance of the convention date.

FEBRUARY 12-14

GENGHIS CON IX, Denver, Colorado

Contact: H.E. Barnhorst, Denver Gamers Association, P.O. Box 2945, Littleton, CO 80161.

Note: Tournaments in *VITP*, *TITAN*, *CIV*, *KING-MAKER* and *ASL* among others.

FEBRUARY 12-14

PENN CON '88, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Contact: John Desmond, 922 South 49th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19143.

Note: A number of tournaments, including ones for *KINGMAKER*, *DUNE*, *1830*, *DIPLOMACY* and *WS&IM*, are planned for this medium-sized convention.

FEBRUARY 12-15

ORCCON II, Los Angeles, California

Contact: Jeff Albanese, P.O. Box 8399, Long Beach, CA 90908. (213) 420-3675.

MARCH 4-6

JAXCON SOUTH 12, Jacksonville, Florida

Contact: Dave Elliot, Jaxcon South Dept. A, P.O. Box 4423, Jacksonville, FL 32201. (904) 772-9040.

Note: Tournaments include competition in *KINGMAKER*, *DIPLOMACY*, *CIVILIZATION* and *SQUAD LEADER*.

MAY 27-30

GAMEX '88, Los Angeles, California

Contact: Jeff Albanese, P.O. Box 8399, Long Beach, CA 90808. (213) 420-3675.

SO THAT'S WHAT YOU'VE BEEN PLAYING

Titles Listed: 127

Total Responses: 538

Rank	Title	Pub	Rank Times			Freq. Ratio
			Last	On	List	
1.	Advanced SL	AH	5	10	3.9	
2.	Up Front	AH	9	21	2.4	
3.	Yanks	AH	—	1	2.3	
4.	B-17	AH	3	7	2.1	
5.	Diplomacy	AH	6	11	2.0	
6.	Paratrooper	AH	7	5	1.9	
7.	Air Force	AH	—	1	1.8	
8.	Third Reich	AH	8	39	1.8	
9.	Russian Front	AH	—	1	1.6	
10.	Squad Leader	AH	14	39	1.5	
11.	Beyond Valor	AH	10	5	1.4	
12.	1830	AH	—	1	1.3	
13.	Guns of August	AH	—	1	1.3	
14.	Russian Campaign	AH	16	39	1.2	
15.	Empires in Arms	AH	15	2	1.1	
16.	War & Peace	AH	—	1	1.1	
17.	Britannia	AH	—	1	1.0	
18.	Flight Leader	AH	1	7	1.0	
19.	Patton's Best	AH	—	1	1.0	
20.	VITP	AH	18	2	1.0	

This is the first appearance for a number of our newest games in this regular survey of what our readership is playing. Not unexpectedly, *YANKS* joins the rest of the *ASL* family on the list. *PATTON'S BEST*, *1830* and *BRITANNIA* also make their showing, catering to a broad range of gaming tastes—from the solitaire to the multi-player, from the simple to the complex. And, yet again, *AIR FORCE* soars onto the listing. And three old favorites return: *RUSSIAN FRONT*, *GUNS OF AUGUST*, *WAR & PEACE*. To make room for these, some eight titles drop below the level of 20th in the survey. Most gratifying to the designers and developers are the continued strength of *UP FRONT* and *B-17*; their consistent showing on this listing indicates that they are truly modern "classics."

CONTEST 138

You're playing one of your favorites, *FORTRESS EUROPA*, and having a good time as the Allies. They have gotten safely ashore in Normandy against relatively light German opposition. German counterattacks were minimally effective, although one Allied airborne unit was eliminated. Unfortunately, an unexpected storm has occurred and prevents Allied reinforcements from landing and halting the use of Allied tactical airpower. The task of the Allied commander is to move the available units (shown in the illustration), making any attacks necessary, to provide the best chance of safeguarding the Normandy beachhead. The German units shown are the only ones immediately available, although the rest of the invasion reaction force is south of Paris. Utilizing all available Allied units, indicate first impulse movement and any attacks. Indicate Allied units that will take losses with an asterisk. Indicate all second impulse movement (assuming that all attacks are successful in at least achieving an E2 result on attacks at 1-1 odds or better). [Note: the first impulse movement and attacks, however, cannot assume such success.] All 2nd Edition rules apply. Remember, the major goal is to safeguard the beachhead.

Readers are reminded that they must rate the current issue, and list three articles, for their entry to be considered in the final evaluation. Readers are also reminded that only one entry may be submitted; excess entries after the first will be discarded—our deadlines are not such as to make haste necessary. Finally, I would remind all to please make legible entries; it will save difficulties all around.

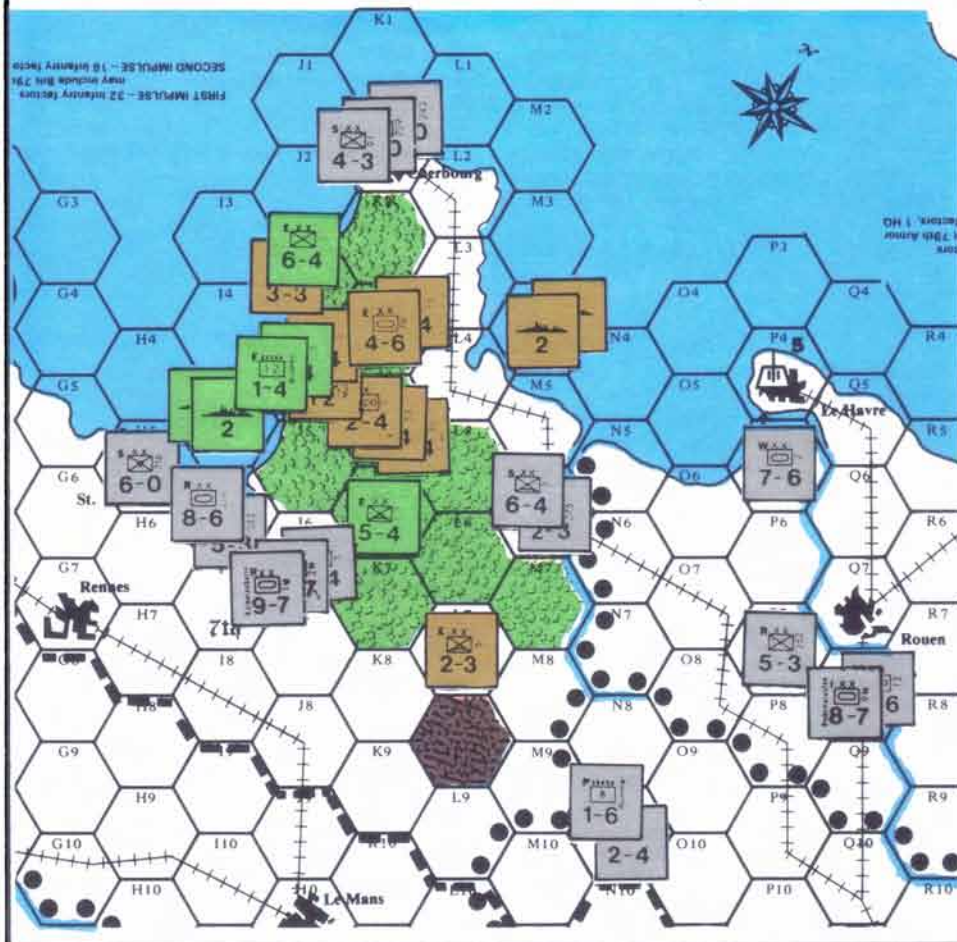
Allied Units Available:

- I5 two Am Naval 2
- J4 Mulberry 12, Am 35Inf (6-4), Am 12HQ (1-4), Br 3Inf (6-4)
- J3 Am 5Inf (6-4), Br 43Inf (3-3)
- K4 Br 79Arm (4-6), Br 15Inf (5-4)
- K5 Br 51Inf (6-4), Br 53Inf (6-4), Br 1Cdo (2-4)
- K6 Am 101Abn (2-3)
- L7 Br 6Abn (5-4)
- M4 two Br Naval 2

German Positions:

- K2 243 Inf (6-0), 709Inf (8-0), 911Inf (2-3)
- M6 3LWInf (6-4), 275Inf (2-3)
- P7 352Inf (5-3)
- P5 2Pz (7-6)—can't move
- Q8 9SS (8-7), 13LW AG (1-6)
- N9 2/6 LWInf (2-4), HQ B (1-6)
- J6 1SS (9-7), 2SS (8-7), 5LWInf (2-4)
- I6 Lehr (8-6), 353Inf (5-3)
- H5 716Inf (6-0)

The answer to this contest must be entered on the official entry form (or a facsimile) found on the insert of this issue. Ten winning entries will receive merchandise from The Avalon Hill Game Company. To be valid, an entry must include a numerical rating for this issue as a whole and a listing of the three best articles in the judgment of the contestant. The solution to Contest #138 will appear in Vol. 24, No. 3 and the list of winners in Vol. 24, No. 4 of *The GENERAL*.





FIGHTING THE PANZER LEADER

The Battles of the Bulge

By Steven B. Wheeler

Many of our fathers and grandfathers who were fighting in Europe in late 1944 recall that Christmas as the one which they hoped would be a lull before the big push into Germany. Hitler's *Wacht Am Rhine* offensive crushed that hope. In the pre-dawn hours of 16 December 1944, three re-equipped German armies, two panzer and one infantry, smashed into the previously quiet Ardennes line. Led by battle-tested veterans, aided by artificial moonlight, armed with new automatic rifles and marching beside tanks that easily outmatched the American Shermans, the German troops broke through the front lines and headed for their objectives: the Meuse River and Antwerp.

Within two days, however, the Americans had begun to disrupt the German advance. On the northern shoulder of the developing bulge the U.S. 2nd and 99th Infantry divisions, making a stand in front of and then on, the Elsenborn Ridge, defeated the German Sixth Panzer Army's repeated heavy assaults. At the same time, the American 7th Armored Division, aided by soldiers and units of the 9th Armored and 106th Infantry divisions, had improvised a defensive perimeter in front of the crossroads town called St. Vith. Denied access to their assigned road net at Elsenborn Ridge, the Sixth Panzer Army's columns began spilling over into the Fifth Panzer Army's routes. The resultant pressure redoubled the German attacks. The St. Vith defenders were forced to withdraw on December 23rd.

That same night, while the rest of the Sixth Panzer Army was stalled, Lt. Colonel Joachim Peiper and the remnants of his battlegroup managed an escape on foot back to their own lines. Peiper's powerful spearhead had been racing the clock, battling poor roads and isolated American units in their path to the Meuse. Their drive came to a bitter end at Stavelot and Trois Ponts, villages only about 20 miles from the Meuse.

The German Fifth Panzer Army attacked into the section of the front which was most thinly held, the central section. The better road net in the area allowed the Fifth Panzer's leading formations to gain ground rapidly, yet by the third day of the attack opposition was stiffening. The American 101st Airborne Division had arrived in the nick of time at Bastogne, a city whose road hub was vital to the German offensive. The "Screaming Eagles" bolstered a mixed bag of units which had been pulled off the west-bound roads and thrown into hasty defensive positions. The ensuing battle for Bastogne, from siege until its relief, raged for over two weeks.

The German 2nd Panzer Division, the vanguard for the Fifth Panzer Army, had bypassed Bastogne in its dash to gain the Meuse. By December 23rd it had gone as far as it could before running low on gasoline. The next day, the American 2nd Armored Division discovered them. A fierce two-day battle began which culminated in the destruction of the 2nd Panzer, though not without heavy cost to the Allies.

Following Hitler's direct orders, the Germans launched an all-out attack on Bastogne on Christmas night. They intended to eliminate the defenders before Patton's Third Army could consolidate their relief. Good flying weather, prayed for by Patton's troops, and tenacious resistance on the ground stopped the Germans cold. In fact, the Third Army's counterattack had met the renewed German assault head-on. Patton's counter-offensive was the beginning of the end for *Wacht Am Rhine*. Within two weeks the American First Army, defending the northern half of the Bulge, would join the Third Army in erasing the salient created by the German surprise offensive. By the end of January 1945 the last German troops had withdrawn back behind the West Wall.

Hitler's final great offensive sorely tried the

American fighting man. In the process of absorbing and defeating the attack, green units and replacements—those that survived—became battle hardened. The G.I.s discovered that they *could* defeat Germany's best troops, often against the odds. The credit for the defeat of Germany's fiercest assault in the Western Front since their 1941 invasion of France has been rightfully awarded to the heroism and self-sacrifice of the American fighting men.

It has been 43 years since the Battle of the Bulge. Wargamers with access to a copy of *PANZER LEADER* can experience some of the drama and intensity of that desperate time by playing situations 13-19. In an effort to make your play of those situations more exciting, this article offers planning and tactical observations, tips and tricks for your experimentation. The author does not presume to have sure solutions for every situation. The objective, instead, is to present working ideas as well as ideas which work.

If you enjoy playing with optional and experimental rules to gain more realism, you already use the rules from sections 15 and 16 in the rulebook. You may also be familiar with hidden deployment. The strategies and tactics in this article often depend upon imaginative implementation of those rules. In addition, you may wish to try the following variant called Unobserved Bombardment.

Unobserved Bombardment

One aspect of Second World War battles which the *PANZER LEADER* rules did not simulate was artillery strike by map coordinates. During the battle around St. Vith, for example, the Americans called in artillery on likely German staging areas to try to break up impending attacks. The Germans, for their part, kept the town under constant shelling to

soften up the defenders and disrupt their reinforcement. The targets of such shelling were often unobserved, being selected by educated guess and directed by map coordinates. Commanders would locate key terrain features on a map, such as towns and crossroads, and order fire missions by map grid numbers. The artillerymen would set their guns by the given coordinates and fire upon command. With no forward observer on hand to direct the fire, there would be some chance the shelling would be off target; however, the off target shells could still hit enemy units in the vicinity.

With the following unobserved bombardment procedure players will be able to plot unobserved fire missions for indirect fire weapons. This experimental rule can allow both players to strike opponent's positions from the first turn to the last. Figure 1 shows the unobserved bombardment diagram consisting of the target hex surrounded by the scatter hexes. Each hex contains a number corresponding to possible die rolls. Beside the diagram is the targeting die roll modification chart. To plot a fire mission a player writes down his intended target hex, and the unit which will perform the mission, in the turn *prior* to desired execution. On the following turn the player rolls one die and consults the modification chart. The player then rolls one die and refers to the targeting diagram to determine if the strike will be on target. Having determined the actual impact hex, the player may then roll for combat results.

Example: The American player wants to disrupt a suspected German concentration in the eastern half of Wiln. He plots his artillery strike by assigning which guns will fire the mission. At the start of his combat phase of the following turn he announces his bombardment and the target. When using hidden deployment his opponent must state whether any of his units were within the area the strike could impact. If not, the American guns lose that turn, otherwise the strike proceeds. For his target roll modifier he rolls one die and checks the modification chart. For example, if he rolled a "5" he would subtract one from his targeting roll. He then throws a die and gets another five, from which he subtracts his roll modification result: $5 - 1 = 4$. A target result of "4" means his artillery will impact the hex northeast of the intended target. If there are no German units in that hex, the designated artillery units lose that turn since they were committed to that fire mission. However, if there are German units in that hex the American fire would affect them normally. Except for the targeting procedure described above, unobserved bombardment follows all the rules for indirect fires.

Unobserved bombardment may be used in any turn, however not without risk. Aside from having some of your guns lose a turn due to an off-target strike, you might tie up your artillery in pre-plotted missions which could leave them unavailable for called-in strikes. Your ability to foresee the need for directed artillery, and the amount of artillery you have available, will be your best guide for the use of unobserved fire missions.

SITUATION #13

The "Fortified Goose Egg" is one of the most exciting and challenging situations in *PANZER LEADER*. Victory Conditions which award decisive victory to either player for destruction of enemy units, and the larger number of units involved, insure a game with plenty of action. The rough parity of the opposing forces means that the player who is most skilled at both offense and defense has the edge.

The American player must choose between holding onto real estate or killing Germans as his victory aim. An evaluation of the forces at his disposal and the terrain the troops must operate in is the first step in forming a plan of battle.

The U.S. infantry, the scout cars, the flak wagons, the antitank guns and the mortar sections are all fairly easy pickings for the Germans. Add them up and they total 33 units, the exact number the German player needs to eliminate for his decisive victory. Your battle plan should place these units in strong defensive positions where they will not be engaged too early in the game. The more time the German artillery and Volksgrenadiers have to work on your troops, the better will be their chances for a decisive win.

The nature of the terrain on both boards does not lend itself to a forward defense. On board D, the town of Nece would be very costly to hold. The Germans have only to flood the ridge with panzers to threaten the town with half-range gunfire and cover the approach and escape routes with interdictive fire. Once the German infantry is into the woods, they will share the cover and defensive benefits with the defenders. Meanwhile, American tanks would have to engage the panzers at half effectiveness. On the C board, the town of Wiln is a similar fix. A powerful panzer strike over the hill southeast of town can cut off any defenders in the woods east of the town, and pulverize Wiln itself. Attempting to hold either of the forward towns means accepting battle with locally superior forces in unfavorable terrain early in the game.

As the American player, your best chance at a decisive win rests in the mobility of your units, and their deployment in depth. You should be able to combine these strengths to exploit the German player's weakness. Due to the victory conditions, which stipulate the capture of nearly every town on the map for a decisive win, the Germans *must* advance. Knowing that, the American player can try to maneuver the "Krauts" into prepared defenses with skillful delaying tactics.

The two mapboards require two different delaying techniques, though. The woods east of Wiln lends itself to an infantry delay. The threat of a panzer assault over the ridge east of Nece must be met with an armored delay. The strong U.S. mechanized infantry battalion is an excellent weapon for the Wiln operation. Its companies can take up positions on the west edge of the woods with the intention of sharply counterattacking any early German advance to the eastern edge. Given the fact that the German must advance, there is a strong possibility that an unobserved artillery strike on the east edges of the woods will find targets. The SS infantry can easily make the edge of the woods in the first turn. Your guns would, hopefully, disrupt them while your heavy infantry moved in to deliver a potentially crippling blow. No matter what the results of that attack, however, the mechanized troops must withdraw on the very next turn. By the second turn the Germans can have an overwhelming armor force on the hill crest and the western slopes. By the third turn, they can deliver several companies of Volksgrenadiers. Keep the U.S. half-tracks close to the troops to facilitate a quick withdrawal into the forest west of town before your best infantry becomes pinned and eliminated. You will need those units to block the forest route to St. Athan.

The mechanized infantry should have a covering force of Shermans on their right flank. Two companies of medium tanks can deny the western slopes of the hill to enemy occupation for at least the first turn. You may not want the tanks to occupy the southernmost reserve slope, however, because there they would be vulnerable to panzer fire as they withdrew into Wiln. Perhaps one company should occupy the slope hex near the trees while the other company, possibly the M4/76 tanks, engages the Germans from the woods beyond the bridge south of town. Set-up in the town itself risks German first turn unobserved shelling. The Shermans may have to occupy the town after firing on the panzers to keep the escape route open for the mechanized

infantry. If that is the case, the Shermans would invite disaster if they stayed in the eastern half of town. They can accomplish the mission safely if the tanks withdraw into the western half. Meanwhile, the other American tanks should move onto the slopes of the bare rise southwest of the bridge. Accomplishment of this plan relies on the use of the Turreted AFV rule.

The delay on the D board is a purely armored one. The other two companies of Shermans can be reinforced with the scout cars, the M4/105 Shermans and the Stuarts and contest the ridge. Several positions are available from which the tanks can engage ridge targets at half-range. The hexes on the southern edge of the woods northeast of town and the central hexes of the woods southeast of Nece provide good fire lanes and covered withdrawal routes. The lightly armored scout cars should not engage the enemy from their forward positions. Their task before Nece is to occupy the western slopes until the Germans threaten them with direct fire or close assault. The recon elements should then withdraw to their final defensive positions. The tanks, on the other hand, must slug it out with the panzers in a fighting withdrawal. From the woods, to the town itself, to the slopes west of Nece, the tankers should seek to exact casualties while they try to scoot back to continue the fight. Smoke screens come in handy for withdrawal over the open terrain to the west and northwest of Nece. It is your armor that will carry the brunt of the delaying tactics, so plot their fire positions carefully. You will also need them to bolster that final defensive line.

The fact that the C board is not tank country limits the German options for capturing St. Athan. They can either try to roll over the ridge east of Merden, or they can try to force the gap between the hills south and east of St. Athan. With a careful set up these areas can become the crucible in which your American decisive victory is forged.

The leg infantry battalions should be the backbone of the main defensive lines. The rough terrain, and the distance the enemy must travel before he finds them, will enhance their survival. The ridge east of Merden is attractive to the enemy because cracking the defense there gives them two towns and a tactical victory. An infantry battalion on the reverse slopes of the ridge, reinforced with half-tracks, the surviving scout cars and the Shermans from the delaying force will make the position a tough nut for your opponent to crack. In addition, the self-propelled artillery can be set up behind the ridge to add their direct fire capability to the final defense. Such a force may well be impossible for the Germans to defeat, especially if the delay keeps them busy until Turn 7.

The second battalion can occupy a central position on the C board which will allow them to either defend or counterattack from commanding terrain. The wooded hill on that board can be very useful in defending both the forest road to the north, and the gap to the west. As with other outfits, this position keeps the weaker infantry from early contact with the enemy, yet places them where they can play a vital role. This leg battalion, as noted above, can be reinforced by the mechanized infantry after it withdraws from their action before Wiln.

The ridge spur running away from the hill towards St. Athan is an excellent place for the antitank guns to lie in wait in a tank trap. The short range 57mm guns can line the flanks of the slopes and wait for the panzers to close inside half-range. The 76mm unit can be positioned in the center so it can fire with the lighter guns, or engage panzers on board D. The tanks withdrawing from the fight before Wiln can join the gap defenders if the need arises. Should the Germans try the gap, the guns and tanks can let them have it while the infantry storms from the hill in close assault.

In your bid for a decisive American victory your

handling of the artillery will be crucial. It is worthwhile to remember that the Germans must set up in a confined area. One or two turns of unobserved bombardment into his likely artillery positions could go a long way toward reducing the German indirect fire advantage. The main job of the U.S. guns, however, should be disrupting German infantry so the G.I.s can eliminate them. That will mean keeping the artillery concentrated. If the Americans can knock out seven or eight German units during the delaying phase, and then disrupt and eliminate two enemy stacks for three turns, decisive victory should follow.

As the German player in the "Fortified Goose Egg", you have no choice concerning how to win the game. The likelihood of advancing the length of the map to capture enough town hexes for a decisive win is remote. The Americans occupy the area in numbers nearly even with the attackers, hidden in the most advantageous terrain. The opponent's numbers, however, are only part of the story. The majority of the American units are weaker than your SS and Volksgrenadier outfits, especially the cavalry and infantry units. Your objective should be to find those units and wipe them out.

Time is an American ally in this situation. The faster you can find his dispositions, the more time you will have to destroy 33 units. Therefore, your attack should commence on the first turn on both boards. That can pose a problem. The German set-up rules split your forces into armor in north and infantry in south sectors. The two forces must be integrated for maximum effectiveness.

Even with all three SS infantry companies in the line at the outset of their attack, they will be unable to carry Wiln if faced with anything but light resistance. Six of their halftracks should pickup Volksgrenadier platoons during the first turn. Assured of adequate infantry power, the SS can then attempt an enveloping attack on any Americans east of the town.

The SS landser should reach the east edge of the woods by three different means. The company assigned to assault the southern hill should be driven onto the wooded slope and dismount. The company in the center can march along the road. The right-hand company should double-time to the trees. Once in place, the SS troopers should expect a sharp counterattack. Keep them together to increase their chances of fending off that attack.

When the SS halftracks meet the VG reinforcements, they may be spotted by hidden enemy forward observers (FO). FOs may also threaten your artillery positions. The FO threat is best countered by a combination of searching fire and a smoke screen. The panzers on the C board can fire up any covered hexes prior to their advance. Any hexes that the panzers, or the 88s, cannot reach can be covered by smoke from the mortars. Your constricted set-up area makes elimination of hidden observers a vital priority. If the Americans delay activation of an FO until a later turn, you should not delay in eliminating it. Finally, a smoke screen dropped in the open area south of the hill before Wiln should ensure that no forward observer can disrupt the half-track rendezvous with the Volksgrenadiers.

After the panzers have delivered any searching fires, they can swarm onto the hill southeast of town to trap any defenders who may be battling the SS from the woods. The panzers should go over the top en masse to ensure sufficient numbers survive to appear on the western slope and crest hexes; the Americans will face too many targets to effectively engage all at once. The U.S. player will then be in a dilemma. If he makes a stand with his tanks to aid the infantry withdrawal, he will face potent counterfire from the undisrupted panzers. If he retreats his armor, the infantry may not survive to fight another day. Either way, the German pincers could seriously weaken the American strength on

board C. The arrival of the reinforcing grenadiers over the next turns should seal the fate of any American defenders trapped in and east of Wiln.

Meanwhile, the rest of the grenadiers should be moving onto the ridge west of Artain. Six platoons can be shuttled ahead by the trucks and the assault guns. If the infantry is set up mounted they can dismount on either side of the road west of the bridge to secure a toe-hold and threaten any reverse slope defenders. In fact, the landser on the assault guns can reach the southern tip of the ridge on the first turn. The remaining infantry and engineers will have to march forward until the trucks can make a second trip. The idea should be to build up the infantry on the eastern slopes until they can go in together, for reasons similar to those dictating a massed panzer assault.

There is one more reason for the VG to avoid rushing over the ridge before Turn 4; by then, the panzers from the C board could be ready to join the assault on Nece. Any defenders in Wiln should be either disrupted or eliminated after the third turn. The panzer sweep over the hill should move through the town on the second turn, or engage any defenders foolish enough to shelter in the town. By the third turn the panzers can be over the bridge and scaling the eastern slopes of the bare ridge southwest of town. By Turn 4, barring bad luck, the panzers can be in firing positions on the western slopes, in supporting range of the Volksgrenadier assault on Nece.

The grenadiers don't all have to wait for the fourth turn, however. A company can infiltrate into the woods which meets the southwestern tip of the ridge. The trees can afford them cover most of the way to Nece. You may also drop a smoke screen on the ridge to assist an earlier advance. Care must be taken, however, to avoid having your grenadiers engaged and chewed up in any piecemeal attack. It may be safer to await the panzer support on the fourth turn. You may also wish to get the engineers up front with the first wave to add more punch to the attack.

As soon as Nece falls, your next objective must be to find and strike the main American concentration. One look at the ridge east of Merden will suggest that it is bound to be a difficult position to storm. The ridgetop is open to massed defensive fires. The ridge is also too cramped for shifting troops around to avoid the U.S. artillery, or to gain a new angle during close assaults. Your *coup de main* should fall on the C board instead.

While the panzers support the push for Nece, your reinforced SS troopers should advance onto the ridge above Wiln and into the forest to the west. There is some danger of an American ambush waiting inside the trees. Therefore, institute a rolling barrage to foil any surprise attack and soften up the defenders. Plot unobserved strikes at least two hexes ahead of your infantry to prevent any casualties due to friendly fire. Keep the shells falling ahead of the troops until they make contact with the enemy. When you find them, shift your stacks to lateral hexes from turn to turn, if possible, to dodge the American artillery.

With the fall of Nece, the panzers should advance to clear the barren hill to the west. If the American tanks can be pushed back over the ridge east of Merden, the panzers can enjoy a more secure push into the gap east of St. Athan. Taking the hill may or may not require the entire panzer force. The strength of the force you send will depend upon the losses you inflicted on the U.S. tankers. If possible, keep some of the armor in Nece to mount up several infantry platoons in order to transport them to their final assault. You may want to plot some smoke screens in the area of the gap to minimize casualties while the troops move up. You will need every available unit for the final push.

With luck, your SS infantry can draw some of the Americans in the gap away to the east. If the

SS experiences a stiff counterattack, you may need to send them additional reinforcements. The rest of your forces, however, should concentrate on that gap.

Remember to leave a garrison in Nece to prevent any American counterattack. A couple of infantry platoons and a tank destroyer unit should do the job.

The assault on the gap should be under way by Turn 8. Panther tanks on the hill beyond Nece can soften up the defenders with long range direct fire and call in artillery shelling. The Panthers can also engage any American units which show themselves on the ridge in front of Merden. The panzers and Volksgrenadiers should enter the gap behind a smokescreen dropped in front of the slopes. The infantry will dismount and scale the slopes while the panzers try to gain the westernmost slope hex. Try to get the panzers over the rough terrain and into St. Athan. If the slopes are held in strength, you may have to settle for pulverizing the defenders until the infantry can punch a hole in their line.

This final assault is most likely to draw the Americans down on your troops rather than break through to St. Athan. The key to the closing turns will be your artillery. Your bombardments must be concentrated enough to stun the defenders so your infantry can knock them out with close assaults. Keep an eye on your own losses. If worst comes to worst, you can forego further battle to preserve a marginal victory through holding Wiln and Nece. Your chance for a decisive victory depends upon your ability to concentrate your forces in your target areas for local superiority.

SITUATION #14

"The Bulge: Thrust" well recreates the historic predicament Peiper's hand-picked task force found itself up against. The battlegroup, a powerful SS armored battalion reinforced with a platoon each of Tigers and King Tigers, was thwarted from reaching their objective by poor roads in their zone of attack and the heroic resistance of isolated American detachments.

As the German player, you must be as aggressive and resourceful as the Colonel was. The success of your attack will depend upon attention even to a detail as seemingly inconsequential as the order of vehicles in your column. The assault must be a true combined arms strike, finely balanced between pressing rapidly forward and destroying the enemy.

The shock effect of overwhelming power is what is likely to quickly carry Wiln. Four infantry platoons mounted on your Tigers and two Panther platoons will pack sufficient punch into your spearhead. Right behind that stack should be a company of mechanized infantry, whose first mission will be to cut the forest road by dismounting on the eastern tip of the central hill. Next in line in the column should be another company of panzers—perhaps Mk IVs which can help shell the town on the second turn from the slopes above the bridge. The sudden appearance of enough firepower to turn the town rubble, coupled with the threat of a severed escape route, should send every American unit in Wiln with transportation hightailing it westward. If not, your panzers can have them in the bag within two turns.

The rest of the column should be ordered for rapid exploitation. As soon as the Americans evacuate the town, or are blown away, get a stack of Panthers through the streets and climbing the near slopes of the ridge to the north. The American player can easily plug the forest road long enough to cost you the game. The German will need a second route to stretch the defenders and to insure his troops get through the woods in time to exit. The Panthers should be closely followed by a mechanized infantry platoon which can close assault any targets the panzers encounter and engage. The flak wagon can be very useful in helping these Panthers soften up any defenders.

When the panzers do encounter Americans, they should forget trying to disrupt the whole stack, especially if the G.I.s are on a slope. Instead, fire to eliminate any antitank guns first, engaging units individually. Once the tanks fire, they should get out of the way so the lander can reach the enemy. Two or three turns of AFV fire followed by close assault should open the ridge route.

Although you will probably be unable to force the forest road, you still must send in a combined arms *kampfgruppe* to tie down the enemy and attempt their elimination. This job is a good task for your less maneuverable Tigers and a pair of Mk IV platoons. The infantry platoon which dismounted to cut the road in the first turn can march to meet the panzers. The tactic of singling out one or two targets for direct fire should be applied to this roadblock. The possibility that the forest blocking force can be set up in depth should lead you to expect a quicker breakthrough over the ridge. Therefore, send the major portion of your forces that way to speed up the exploitation.

Immediately upon clearing the ridge route, you should unleash the Panthers and MK IVs in a blitz to St. Athan. Get several panzer platoons onto the slopes northeast of town to provide fire support while the rest rush the bridges. If you get lucky, the American engineers will not have completed the explosive charges and you can wipe them out before they attempt demolitions. If the bridges have been fully prepared, there is still a good chance that one of them will not blow, so press your tankers forward. Keep the rest of the German troops moving west as well. By this stage of the game, you barely have enough time left to meet your exit requirements.

Once over the bridge you simply concentrate on exiting. The German should ignore any remaining American units that are not physically in the way. Any that are should be overrun. Your battle group is strong enough, and mobile enough, to win with ease. Aggressive and resourceful tactics which emphasize enemy destruction and rapid advance at the proper times should result in victory.

If you chose to take the American side in the "Thrust" situation, you must be prepared to spread your units at key roadblock positions. Those positions should *not* include a determined stand in Wiln. The Germans can easily cut the forest road by the second turn and doom the defenders to slaughter by massed panzer fire early in the play. In addition, enemy infantry advancing through the woods west of the stream can disrupt any engineers who may attempt bridge demolition. Your only sure chance for a victory lies in destruction of the bridges at St. Athan. The bulk of your troops must give the engineers on those bridges time to prepare the charges.

Because the Germans can isolate Wiln early in the second turn, the troops who start there should set up ready for evacuation. Lack of transportation will strand two units in Wiln. The infantry and the engineers will be needed to block the forest road and the gap on the western end of the north ridge. That leaves the 57mm antitank guns and the Bofors unit to volunteer to fight to the end—but where? If they are placed in the town, the Germans have only to drive over the slopes on the first turn and shell them into oblivion in the second without the guns ever getting in a decent shot. Try placing the units in the trees at the west end of the northern bridge. From there they may disrupt the enemy in the west half of Wiln, or even eliminate a panzer platoon as it tries to cross the bridge.

The infantry and engineers, meanwhile, waste no time in taking up blocking positions. One infantry platoon, one engineer platoon and two antitank outfits from St. Athan can form an effective block on the slope hex at the northern end of the ridge gap. The reverse slope position will give them a doubled

defensive strength and make the Germans come just a little bit farther to find and engage them. The other two infantry platoons, the halftracks, and the other two engineer platoons from Wiln can form a strong roadblock at the western road hexes in the forest. If you place the halftracks in front of a stack of infantry and engineers, you will delay the German long enough for the dogfaces to get in at least one good close assault, thereby delaying the enemy that much more and perhaps increasing the G.I.s' chances of survival. Remember, those blocking forces must give the St. Athan engineers three turns to ready the explosives. Be sure to keep the trucks adjacent to the infantry and engineer team to enable them to withdraw quickly back to St. Athan once the Germans break through the ridge defenders.

As soon as the Germans have breached either of the blocking positions, you must attempt to withdraw any survivors to St. Athan—unless mounting them will enable the "Krauts" to destroy them in transit. If you are able to retreat some infantry back to the town, they may be the emergency defense in the event that a bridge doesn't blow. The other emergency defenders are the tank destroyer platoons. Those units will come into their own by delaying the panzers which are racing for the bridges. Placed on the hill south of town, the TDs can shoot up any tanks which try to cross an intact bridge. With luck, they could disrupt a stack of panzers so that American infantry and engineers can close assault. Even if unable to extract any infantry, the TDs can still try to volley fire on an entire stack to block a bridge for at least one turn. After the tank destroyers fire, however, they will have to move to alternative positions. The Germans will have plenty of panzers around to wipe them out if they stay put. The southernmost town hex is a good secondary position if the southern bridge has not been blown, and if there are no undisrupted Germans on that bridge. Should the northern bridge be standing, the westernmost hilltop affords a fine alternate position.

There is a good chance that one or the other of the bridges will fail to blow up, which is what makes this situation exciting right up to the final turns. That is the best reason for not withdrawing either blocking force right after the charges are readied. You don't get any points for survivors, only for preventing the German from meeting his exit requirements. Making the blocking forces hold to the last possible moment will put that much more pressure on your opponent. Other ways to delay the enemy include packing the town hexes with trucks and engineers, filling the clear terrain west of town with trucks, and executing a charge with the tank destroyers to overrun a stack of Germans before they can exit. The game often may be won by preventing just one more German unit from leaving the mapboard. Focus your determination on that objective and you can win against the odds, as the Americans did who actually foiled Pieper's thrust.

SITUATION #15

"Elsenborn Ridge" gives players a chance to see how the elite 12th SS Panzer Division fared against the dogfaces. The young Nazis were equipped with German's latest weapons, including some numbers of the King Tiger tanks armed with the 88mm gun. In contrast, the American Sherman's 75mm gun had only a 50% chance of penetrating the extraordinary armor of a King Tiger. How could the Americans hope to win?

As the American player, your job is to deny the enemy player only one of his victory objectives. Your units are not strong enough to defend both the exit area and the towns. If you try to defend St. Athan, your troops will not even live long enough to regret it. The panzers can make mincemeat out of the defenders within three turns and seriously weaken your ability to hold anywhere else. A

tenacious defense of Wiln holds much more promise. To reach that town, the German player will have to kick your troops off rough and wooded terrain.

What about preventing a German exit? The only place that the German can be confident of exiting from is through the gorge southwest of St. Athan. Time may run out for him if he intends to battle through Wiln and exit along the road. Your American troops could probably hold out on the west bank of the stream behind Wiln, but they will have a very difficult time holding the approaches through the gorge. Once the enemy gets panzers into firing positions in St. Athan and along the eastern slopes of the ridge spine itself, they could pick off the defenders one by one. Your defense is sure to break after several turns of direct tank fire and deadly engineer-assisted close assaults. The loss of the exit defenders would leave your American force seriously depleted. A defense of the exit route is a highly risky proposition.

So, your best chance at an American victory is to defend Wiln with everything you have. Most of the infantry should be split between positions covering the forest route and the open ridge hex due east of town. Two companies astride the forest road should hold out nicely. You may want to reinforce the two companies detailed to hold the ridge simply because it is such a direct route, easily reached by the second turn. The rest of the infantry can seal off the other two access routes. One company can occupy the southern slope of the hill southwest of Wiln where the road enters the woods to deny any German thrust there until late in the game. The other infantry platoons can aid the tanks in a delaying action behind the ridge spine south of St. Athan.

The idea behind a delaying force on the reverse slopes of the spine is not to slow down the German exit so much as to delay a German assault on Wiln from the west. An American tank and infantry team can keep the enemy at arm's length for six to seven turns. The infantry should be mounted in the halftracks and set up on reverse slopes, but they should not make a stand there. As soon as German panzers make contact they should withdraw behind the woods on the extreme western edge of the board just south of the break in the trees. The two platoons of Shermans, stiffened by a platoon of M10 tank destroyers, should be set up so they can engage any panzers which gain the slopes vacated by the withdrawing infantry. Their set-up should allow them time to shoot and scoot around the edge of the woods without risking return fire. Each time the panzers come into view, the tankers should shoot and scoot—until they at last reach the area behind the western bridge at Wiln. The infantry can make a stand at the western tip of the trees on the edge of the board, or they can be pulled back to hang onto the approach to the bridge. A 57mm antitank gun section can augment either position. You may want the halftracks to drop off the dogfaces and return to town for other duties.

The block hunter can perform a vital role in sealing the southeastern road into town. Placed on the bridge it can become part of a deadly tank trap. A M10 tank destroyer positioned on the southern hilltop should be able to brew up any panzer outfit foolish enough to try negotiating the block. If there are other panzers able to spot them, however, you may need to call in a smoke screen to enable the TDs to escape. A scout car and an 81mm mortar section on station just inside the trees will keep the Germans from forcing the road long enough for you to dispatch help as needed.

The third M10 unit should help the antitank guns cover the eastern ridge. There is bound to be a strong force of panzers sent to storm through one or the other, or both, openings in the trees. When the action gets heavy, the TD unit which was watching the blocked bridge can lend a hand. Try to

preserve the tank destroyers as long as possible. They will be needed to stem any attacks which break through the infantry.

Your 105mm howitzers can be carefully placed so that one of them covers one half of the perimeter each. Remember that their minimum indirect fire range is eight hexes. Optimum positions would allow the guns to fire direct protection. A forward observer on the hill southwest of St. Athan can be useful in directing fire missions on the German concentrations attempting to exit through the draw.

Imaginative and deliberate positioning of American troops can result in your retention of Wiln despite the heavy odds. Keep your forces flexible and your guns firing, but hold onto the approaches. In the final two turns, you may need to occupy both town hexes and simply hang on. If Wiln remains liberated, you win.

When playing the German side in Situation 15, you are faced with a curious predicament. You have awesome panzer and infantry forces at your command, but almost no artillery. Presumably, the guns have been delayed by the horrendous traffic jams which hampered the entire Sixth Army offensive. Therefore, your skill in the use of tank/infantry teams will determine your chances for victory.

The quickest way to capture St. Athan, break through to the exit area, and storm Wiln is to send the SS Panthers and other transport into Nece on the first turn to meet the Volksgrenadiers. You should be able to mount up all but two VG companies. Those companies can advance on St. Athan on foot. By the second turn, the Panthers can drive within range of St. Athan. The grenadiers on foot can double time to press the attack on the following turn. Any defenders in the town shouldn't last long against the Panthers' deadly 75mm fire and the infantry close assaults.

The Panthers' next objective would be to break through the draw southwest of St. Athan. If the Americans try to make a stand on the rough hexes, the panzers take up firing positions and blast them out of the way within three turns. The Panthers would drop the infantry adjacent to the G.I.s to speed up their attack. If the Americans do not hold the slope hexes, the Panthers can advance along them until they draw direct fire. Chances are that the enemy will not leave the exit route unguarded. Upon hostile contact, the Panthers drop the infantry and engage the enemy. The infantry can then either attempt to close assault, or can close in on the western edge of the trees to trap any delaying forces. Six Panther platoons and four companies of grenadiers should open a route offboard in plenty of time to meet the exit requirements. From the exit area, the Panthers must swing south to assault Wiln from the rear. Try to organize your follow-up forces so an infantry company can move with the armor without distracting from the ten units designated to exit.

An important patrolling mission should commence even as the assault on the exit route proceeds. A Volksgrenadier company, perhaps reinforced by a platoon of engineers, should move south along the forest road. Their mission would be to contact and pin down any blocking force on that route. If this mission is overlooked, the American player would be free to transfer some, or all, of the blocking forces to hinder your effort to take Wiln. One company of VG may not affect your chances for victory, but if that company can tie down one or more US infantry companies, the shot at a win is better.

While the battles for St. Athan and the exit route rage, the Tigers and the SS infantry should be wearing down the Wiln defenders. Try to keep the attack cohesive. If you allow only a couple of Tiger platoons to appear on the ridge east of town before any other Tigers can be spotted, the enemy could knock them out and reorganize before the next batch shows itself. On the other hand, if all Tiger units heave into view at once the American AT defense

would be swamped, vulnerable to the lethal 88s. The Tigers east of town may have to wait for the Tigers driving up from the south. The Americans will be sure to have blocking forces along the southern approaches.

In the event that the bridge southeast of Wiln is not blocked, the Tigers should capture it and sweep onto the hill southwest of town. A blocked bridge would send the attack through the woods south of the hill. Even if the bridge is blocked, however, you should position one or two Tiger platoons adjacent to it to enable you to slip some Tigers behind the defenders in the woods. And if you send the Wirbelwind unit along with the Tigers assigned to clear the southern routes, that advance will be speeded. Try keeping the flak wagons up with the infantry so that they can provide some direct fire support against individual American units.

Wipe out the southern blocking groups as soon as possible so that your concentric main assault will have time to clear Wiln. By the time your Tigers surge onto the commanding hilltops, your Panthers should be battering at the western approach. Blast the town from all sides and then sweep in with Tigers and landser. The final rush on Wiln must be brutal and overwhelming. Anything less will result in a victory for the enemy.

SITUATION #16

The diversity of *PANZER LEADER's* situations is one of the strengths of this tactical game. Shorter situations, such as #16 ("Bastogne: Prelude"), enable gamers to enjoy a taut, fast-paced bout with lots of action in far less time than those previously played.

When you play the American side in "Prelude", you enjoy two distinct advantages. You have the initiative; and, thanks to the M7 self-propelled howitzers, you have enormous firepower. The American need only recognize the value of this good fortune and put his forces to optimum use to guarantee victory.

Starting first means that your infantry can occupy all three town hexes just ahead of the Germans. They must do so to deny the enemy any toe hold within the buildings. The strongest defenses can be gained by setting up a four-platoon stack on the bridge. Two platoons of paratroopers can then dash into the eastern and southern hexes. A second four-platoon stack should follow the first to occupy the northern hex and secure the bridgehead. You may even want to send a platoon of Stuarts into the eastern hex to help hold it and give the tanks a better position from which they can shoot up the German scout cars as they appear.

The second paratrooper battalion should also be placed in four-platoon stacks on the road. They will have to advance over the ridge and into town as soon as they can. They may get a chance to make a flank attack; however, their primary mission must be to reinforce the town.

The M7s should set up on the ridgetop road hex. These have the crucial task of knocking out the Nazi armor early in the game before it can assist German infantry in taking the town. The M7s should engage the enemy armor in its set-up hexes, or as it enters. If the Germans can get their armor adjacent to the town, your M7s have two options. They either pick off the exposed landser, or move into the town itself to take the enemy on head-to-head.

The rest of the Stuart tanks can either find positions on the ridge or duel with the German scout cars, or they can try an old-fashioned charge. The latter is one way to get at the enemy if they close in behind the buildings. Try to send the Stuarts into an overrun assault which allows them to wind up on the slopes to the northeast. The slopes will afford them good firing positions and protection.

In the event of a duel with the German armor out in the open, your M7s should disrupt the tank

destroyers and wipe out the SdKfz 234/4 unit in the first round of fire. The subsequent rounds are concentrated on the tank destroyers until they are eliminated. The Stuarts can direct their fire on the Pumas until they are ko'ed. From that point on, the American tanks and guns will have only to snipe at the landser while the paratroopers hold onto the town.

For playing the German forces, your strategy hinges upon one all important tactic. You must disrupt the Americans in the northern hex on the first turn so that the rest of their infantry cannot get into the town. The best means of accomplishing that mission would be to set up a landser company, reinforced with the engineers, on the road which traverses the slope northeast of town. The stack behind these should contain four landser platoons. Your first close assault will therefore be at two-to-one odds, including the engineer bonus.

You will need to take out some insurance against the American guns blasting your engineers. This is when your assault guns come into play. The StuG-III's will have to be set up in the open on the southerly road into town. Their mission is to threaten the U.S. artillery and draw their fire. If the Americans do not fire on them, they could disrupt one M7 or both, which the Americans certainly cannot afford. Better to lose the assault guns than to lose the engineers.

The scout cars have set up under cover to remain safely out of reach. They will become the infantry's close support. If they are placed behind the woods, they can move up close to town on the first turn. By moving up to the southwestern tip of the village, they can assist the landser in wiping out whatever defenders are there while they remain concealed from American artillery. The rest of the infantry have to press their close assaults rapidly. They should first concentrate on the hex occupied by the Stuart platoon. They should also ring the whole town to prevent an enemy flanking maneuver.

When dealing with the bridgehead defense, you will do well to remember not to eliminate them until the other two hexes have fallen. The lack of an advance after combat means the U.S. player can slip in reinforcements before your landser could occupy the hex. Keep this bridgehead disrupted while your scout cars and infantry team up to reduce first one hex, then the other. The German engineers will probably become tied down in a struggle to keep the bridgehead pinned; therefore, your infantry coordination and concentration will become all the more important.

If you lose both the assault guns and the heavy scout cars, your chances of victory fade drastically. You must safeguard the 234/4s, the Pumas, the Lynxes, and a 234/1 unit so you have enough punch to disrupt a town hex per turn as a pre-requisite to close assaults. Keep the armor support, and the engineers, adjacent to the town where the M7s can't reach them. By preserving your supports and pinning the bridgehead, you might just pull off a victory.

SITUATION #17

The original title for Situation 17, "Turning Point: Celles", refers to the historical dawning of Allied supremacy in the Bulge which came around Christmas 1944. An alternative title suggestive of the salient tactical feature of this scenario would be "The Coiled Cobra". The combative power of the Panthers, pent up in Wiln, often determines the outcome of this highly intense game.

When you play the German side, your first concern should be what to do with the troops that must set up in St. Athan. The town is too exposed to be anything but a deathtrap once the Allied tanks occupy the nearby ridges. Even if the town were defensible, the garrison would not be strong enough to hold it for twelve turns. These troops, however,

are too valuable to simply abandon. The Wespes, the engineers, the grenadiers can all contribute a great deal toward the defense of Wiln. You might want to attempt an evacuation.

A wholesale evacuation of St. Athan would be simple indeed if the American fails to block the road into the forest. In such a fortunate circumstance, you only have to lay down a couple of well-placed smoke screens on the open portion of the road so that the entire garrison can slip away before the Allies can get off a shot. If the enemy does block the road where it enters the forest, try driving around and over the north ridge through one of the gaps in the trees.

There is an alternative to evacuation which you may use if you fear a breakout would be impossible. Reposition your garrison on the slopes south and east of the town for a fight to the death. The slopes will enhance their survival and allow some of the units a few turns in which they can call in artillery strikes on the attacking Allies. The longer they can hold out, the longer it will take the Allies to move on Wiln, and the more enemy units they can eliminate in the process.

Your first priority for most of the units which set up around Wiln should be to establish the strongest defensive perimeter you can devise given the available terrain. Blocking the approach routes with infantry will establish the outer ring. One company each should occupy the western ends of the bridges on that side of town. Another company should set up on the slopes two hexes north of town, ready to move onto the ridge itself. A fourth company should be mounted in halftracks so it can occupy the area around the northeast bridge. A fifth, mounted in trucks, should also be placed on the northeast road; their destination will be the road hex which sits at the east edge of the hill southeast of town.

Within the infantry ring, the anti-aircraft, artillery and assault guns can be positioned to move into supporting roles. You want to avoid placing any of those fragile units directly inside Wiln. The town will surely come under bombardment before they could get into action. Try transporting a quad 20mm and a single 20mm team onto the wooded hilltop hex southeast of town. A similar team can occupy the edge of the woods north of town at the foot of the ridge. The latter should be faced to cover the open ridgetop with the right-hand limit of its field of fire. The heavy mortars and the Nebelwerfers should occupy the eastern slope of the ridge east of town. That position will enable them to remain in action, unspotted, for the majority of the game. Face the rocket launchers so they can cover the western approaches. Your Wespe unit can sight into the same area, including St. Athan, from the western slope of the same ridge. The three GW38s can augment the infantry roadblocks, the anti-aircraft positions, or a combination of the two. Their mobility will enable them to switch from position to position to meet developing threats.

Readers should notice that one infantry company, enough halftracks to mount it, and the Panthers have not been mentioned in the perimeter defense. You have just discovered a key element in a successful defense of Wiln: a powerful armored reserve. Place the Panthers in the town and on the adjacent slope hex. The landser, mounted in their halftracks, can set up with the Wespe. Your mobile strike force is thereby poised to execute a daring raid aimed at the American support units.

This raid must commence on the very first turn. The Panthers should precede the infantry over the north ridge, bound for Grancelles. If you are a cautious player, you may want the Panthers to pause on the slope and the ridge to pulverize the city before they proceed into the open. If, on the other hand, you doubt your opponent has read this article and is not prescient enough to garrison that town, allow your armor to sweep off the ridge and on-

ward. Prudence may suggest that you keep two Panther platoons on the slope to cover the advancing elements, yet remain close enough to Wiln to be quickly recalled if the need arises. The rest of the raiders should attempt to penetrate the city and gain the northern riverbank. If they are able to do so, they should find and engage the American artillery quickly. The raiding force has only two turns before the Americans can mount an effective counter-attack.

In the event that the Allied player does garrison the town, your raiders will have to settle for wiping out those defenders. By the time they have done so, the enemy will be showing up in strength. It will be time for your troops to retire within the safety of your perimeter. You may need to lay down a few smoke screens to aid their withdrawal. Resist the temptation to allow the Panthers to slug it out with the arriving hordes of Shermans. Your panzers will be better off engaging them from much more advantageous positions within the perimeter.

The rest of the German game plan is simple. Marshal the most strength to meet the worst threat. You may want to try a few tricks in the process. Place a pair of halftracks at the west ends of the bridges west of town. Let them become wrecks so they block the approaches and restrict Allied stacking in those vital hexes. Pull the infantry back from the northeast bridge after the fifth or sixth turn. Your raid will keep that approach clear for that long. One infantry platoon, reinforced with a halftrack, can hold within the woods east of town on the road where it climbs the slope for awhile. A similar team can hold out at the foot of the southeastern hill, freeing up the other two platoons for more urgent duties. Finally, when the Americans are closing in during the final two or three turns, pack the town hexes with panthers. Even if the enemy can wipe them out, their wrecks will allow only one Allied unit per hex, leaving the town susceptible to a last-ditch counter-attack.

Your job as the American player in the scenario is made a little simpler thanks to your knowledge of the German's strength in his dispositions. Your knowledge of his restricted set-up should lead you to plan a quick reduction of St. Athan and a climactic battle for Wiln. If you try to take on Wiln first, the highly mobile recon units in St. Athan could play havoc with your supporting artillery. These recon forces wouldn't even have to engage the artillery with direct fire to maul them. All they need do is call one well-placed round of artillery fire in on the American guns. In addition, by the time you take Wiln, you may not have the remaining strength and time to capture St. Athan. Therefore, isolate St. Athan, reduce it swiftly, and guard your supporting units.

Whether the Germans try to evacuate St. Athan, or relieve it, your forces must encircle the town to close off all access routes. The British should send six platoons of Shermans onto the two hilltop hexes which overlook the town and road leading east. A scout platoon should dismount on the slope hex where the road climbs the hill, thus completing the southern portion of the encirclement. The American player should occupy the slope northeast of town with seven tank platoons. The other three platoons, including the 105mm Shermans, move to occupy Caverge. If the enemy tries to slip out of town through smoke screens, and if you have blocked the forest road, their route must take them right past Caverge. Two dismounted mechanized infantry companies will close the trap on St. Athan from the northwest. You may want to lay a couple of smoke screens yourself on the northwestern edges of the town to enable your infantry to close in without taking casualties. You now have St. Athan in your firm grip and are prepared to crush the defenders.

Only one thing might distract you from your St. Athan operation. A German armored raid cannot be ignored. You cannot afford to let the enemy

eliminate any of the precious artillery, especially in view of the numerous German infantry units. The primary mission of your Allied recon units should be to shield the artillery from any German attack until some of the medium tanks attacking St. Athan can turn and drive the marauders back.

The British Daimlers, scouts and the other two tank platoons should erect a delaying screen well ahead of their 35-pounders. With the British guns positioned in the Merden vicinity, the delaying forces should dominate the central area of the map-board. The tanks can assume protected positions on the forward slopes of the central hill. Your Daimlers can hide in the woods astride the road where it issues northward. The scouts and their mortar section can stay in Nece as a reserve.

The American scout cars and Stuarts can team up with the anti-tank guns to form a similar screen for the U.S. artillery. The American guns must set up on the western two-thirds of board A. Therefore, the American screen should be established within and east of Grancelles. A lone M20 unit stationed in hex AW2 can deny easy access to any Germans storming over the ridge. The anti-tank guns, the Stuarts and the M8s should assume blocking positions on the eastern roads within the edges of the woods. The other M20s and the 81mm mortar sections should occupy the southern hexes of the city. Finally, the third mechanized infantry company should remain in Grancelles, mounted in their halftracks, as a ready reserve. Your artillery can now operate safely behind delaying screens, which can slow any sudden raid until the medium tanks arrive.

Although a German raid must be dealt with swiftly and forcefully, the Allied player must keep the pressure on St. Athan. Heavy, well-directed artillery concentrations, followed by close assaulting mechanized infantry and halftracks, should keep the enemy in the St. Athan area on the ropes. The British tanks can remain on the hill to make mincemeat of any Germans who try to flee. You should leave a company of Shermans on the northwest ridge for the same purposes. Send a unit to block the forest road, if you have not done so previously. The rest of the American armor will have to deal with any raiders.

Send the M4/76 units onto the northern slopes of the ridge where they can engage the Panthers at half-range and be protected from the long 75s. A company of M4/75 Shermans can slip into Grancelles, possibly behind a smoke screen. The Stuarts can reach the city from the east. These two moves, which will surely compel your opponent to retreat back into Wiln, are most effective when executed in combination.

Your hammering at St. Athan should reduce the defenders enough by the fourth turn that another company of mechanized infantry can mount up and move around the north edge of the ridge. That move will threaten to cut the Panthers off from their route of withdrawal. Meanwhile, the British delaying forces can maneuver to the foot of the hill southeast of Wiln. While they threaten the German underbelly, their positions can be taken over by a pair of tank platoons freed from the battle for St. Athan. The combined American and British movements will force any but the most reckless German player to recall his Panthers before they are trapped and Wiln is captured.

Once you have the Germans bottled up in Wiln and eliminated at St. Athan, your plan must shift into high gear. Concentrate your forces for a coordinated, all-out assault on Wiln by the sixth turn to have any hope of capturing the town. The key word is "coordination". If you send tanks in here and there in small packets, the German will chew them up piecemeal and you can forget any decisive victory.

Your best approach to Wiln will be over the north ridge. A thrust through the forest can get bogged down too easily. A dash across the southwest

bridges will be too constricted. A run over the hill to the southeast has too much open ground to cover. Any attack over the northeast bridge must traverse too much ground. The north ridge is closer, and most importantly two mechanized infantry columns can attack abreast once they are over the ridge.

Your Wiln assault must be concentric. Send a mechanized infantry company along the forest road to tie down the Germans defending there. Send the other two infantry companies, perhaps minus one platoon held for a late developing mission, over the ridge. Do not expose the infantry to direct fire, even if you have to lay a smoke screen to avoid it. The infantry is the key to Wiln's liberation. Start them off a full turn before the armor. You want the infantry to clear the ridge quickly so that the tanks can swarm into view of Wiln *en masse*. For that reason, your British forces must wait behind the southwest slope and at the foot of the southeast hill until the U.S. tankers can advance in tandem. The massed tank attack should go in no later than Turn 8.

When the tankers do go in, they should enter via four approaches. The Americans must use both of the ridge gaps; the longer ranged M4/76s can enter through the more westerly. The British will swarm over the southwestern slopes and onto the southeastern hill. Position the British on the slopes nearest Wiln, if possible. Support the latter British force with the American Stuarts and scout cars. The reserve mechanized infantry platoon can join the Stuarts' attack. By letting the Germans have it from all directions at once you should find a weak point. He will shift his forces around quite a bit to try to deal with your concentric attack, possibly creating a crack through which can pour a few of your tanks.

The most likely event, however, will be your mechanized infantry slugging their way south to Wiln behind well-directed artillery fire. Their close assault on Wiln is the only sure way to carry the town. Should they clear one of the hexes, send in a tank platoon on the double. If you can occupy even one hex of the town, yours is the victory.

SITUATION #18

"Bastogne: Siege" provides a vivid illustration of why Hitler wanted to launch the offensive in overcast weather. The Allied tactical air superiority proved a devastating threat to the German drive. The American P-47s and observation aircraft in this situation often turn the tables on the stronger German force.

The fact that your airpower is delayed could force you—as the American player—to take added care with the set-up. A look at the terrain and the German's highly mobile recon elements should lead you to conclude that the southern edge of the map is the quickest approach route and the most difficult to defend. The German has only to mount up his troops and roll along the bottom hexrow to be on board A in two turns. Once there, they could occupy the two wooded areas, or head for Grancelles. Either way, they will be tough to dislodge. The hill and slope hexes east of St. Athan can be useful in limiting the southern route, but the open area south of the hill can only be contested by your armor. The tank destroyers and M105 Shermans should occupy the southwestern woods hex so they can engage the panzers as they pour around woods south of St. Athan. An infantry company stationed in the woods can bolster the M10s. Another company of "Screaming Eagles" should occupy the slope where the road descends the hill. A third company can stretch across the other reverse slopes to ensure that any Germans who try the hill will be left silhouetted on the open hilltop. You could position an 81mm mortar platoon on the wooded hilltop to act as a forward observer. Cap off your southern defense preparations with a platoon of Stuarts hidden in the trees behind the tank destroyers. Any Germans which slip past the tank destroyers will have an unpleasant surprise waiting for them.

The area just north of St. Athan is another route of approach. The gap between the stream and the wooded hill can be guarded by a single infantry company positioned across the reverse slopes of the ridge spine. If you reinforce that company with the half-tracks, the position is strengthened and the defenders can be quickly recalled should the Germans assault through another sector. The hilltop can provide your second mortar platoon with a good observation and interdiction post.

The combination of wide open country behind Wiln and the constricted approaches make the northern half of the mapboard the least likely choice for any serious advance. Three scout platoons can hold the access routes quite effectively until reinforcements can arrive. Place the troops on the slope behind the ridgetop gap due west of Wiln, on the bridge to the northwest, and one hex west of the end of the northeast road. A platoon of Stuarts placed in the hex just north of the bridge might come in handy should any enemy recon units try to slip across the northern hex row. The third Stuart platoon should guard the southern entrance into the central forest. If the Germans do try a northern offensive, your light troops can delay them long enough for mobile reserves to arrive.

Your mobile reserves should consist of the other two infantry companies, mounted in trucks, and the M8 and M20 scout cars. If you position one mounted company on the road just below the bridge southeast of Wiln, and the other in Grancelles, your reserve infantry can be dismounting at either end of the mapboard within the first turn. The scout cars can reach anywhere on the board from Caverge. The American artillery can find any number of good positions on board A. If you are using the Unobserved Bombardment rule, however, you may wish to avoid the more obvious places, such as the town of Kuhn.

When the action begins, your troops should rapidly concentrate. The trucks should drop off the ready reserves and head out for either the scout platoons or the other infantry battalion. If the Germans come through the southern route, the bulk of your forces will be in a good position to deal with them. Just feed the reserves into the woods south of Grancelles and try to keep the enemy spotted. If your infantry has to risk German bombardment in order to call in your own guns, so be it. The only way you can win is to wipe out your opponent.

Get your P-47s and the spotter plane over the area of board D most likely to contain the German artillery at the very start of the fourth turn. The Germans will have their artillery in one of three places: around Merden, near Nece, or in Artain. The avenue of approach the German uses should tip you off to which particular area. Let the planes patrol just outside of half range of any anti-aircraft guns until they can spot the firing. When you have them located, send the planes in all together to be sure that some get through. You may want to arm several of the planes with rockets and others with bombs to effectively engage targets both in and outside of built-up areas. The success of your first strike will dictate when your second flight needs to enter. The sooner you can eliminate the German big guns, the better.

Just as the German artillery is the key to his success, your guns are crucial to your own ability to repel the German attack and so win. If any enemy units penetrate within spotting distance of your guns, their destruction must become a top priority.

Any time you choose to play the German side in "Bastogne: Siege" you had best be feeling lucky, or secure in the knowledge that your opponent has not played the situation very much. Your job is to establish 30 or more units on board A in such a way that they are still there by the of twelve turns. The biggest problems will be the American artillery and air support, both of which will be trying to wipe out your guns so they can turn to your mobile

elements.

As noted above, there are three routes onto board A. If you try to fight your way over any of the ridges and hills, you can forget about victory. The American player has just enough ground strength to pin your troops to the slopes and hilltops until his artillery can grind you up. However, if you feel your opponent might not react quickly enough in concentrating his defenders (i.e., within the first two turns), then you might try capturing the northern approach. If you can occupy the eastern section of the hill northeast of Wiln by the second turn of play, you could hold out in the vicinity until the final turn, and then swarm onto board A.

The central portion of the mapboard is entirely suited to a defense in depth. An American scout car here, and infantry company there—and there goes twelve turns.

The southern route is the only consistent and convenient approach. Even if your opponent has read this article, he will be hard pressed to prevent your victory without some luck. Prepare your troops for a blitz.

The first objective must be to get as many of your units onto board A as soon as possible. Mount up all of your infantry on anything with a motor and set them up around the bottom of the swamp southeast of Einkel. Plot a couple of smoke screens along their line of advance so they can gain the woods without taking excessive casualties. When the turn marker says go, flood the panzers forward as far as they can reach along the bottom hex row. Send the recon and tank destroyers right in after them. Your infantry-laden trucks, at the back of the column, must stay within cover, or you lose half of your assault force—and the game.

The panzers will inevitably draw fire from the waiting Americans. They are supposed to. While the U.S. player shoots up your first several tanks, your recon units should race onto the board A. Their goal is to get into Grancelles on the second turn. Should they be able to reach northern Grancelles, they could spot some of the heavy U.S. artillery. Elimination of the enemy 155mm guns and an M7 or two would more than offset the loss of some of your scouts.

The rest of your maneuvering troops should make for the woods south of the city. Rapidly overwhelm any defenders and occupy the northernmost hexes attainable to keep reinforcements out. The American player can't pulverize your troops with his guns if he can't spot them. The rest of the game will be give over to retaining your foothold against all comers.

If it wasn't for the Allied air support, that plan would hand you a certain tactical victory every time. Your guns are strong enough to knock off any American ground force approaching, especially since the inadequate American transport would deliver enemy reinforcements piecemeal. There can be no wonder, then, that the American will use his planes to eliminate your artillery.

There are several tactics you can try for outfoxing the planes. How you position the guns is fundamental. If you pursue the southern route, avoid placing your guns around Merden. Your 75s and mortars can assume alternative positions along the woods between the Merden ridge and Nece. The ridge northwest of St. Athan would shield them from ground observation while the trees would force the planes to close within AA range to spot them from the air. Try placing your heavy guns somewhere near Artain. A careful search will reveal several good sites in that area. By decentralizing your artillery concentration, you could confuse your opponent. He would expect the guns to be behind your maneuvering forces, thereby sending his planes to search the Merden area. When the aircraft fly over the center of board D to attempt to come in behind your AA guns, let them have it.

Your AA guns will naturally be stationed near

your artillery. If the artillery and the covering AA units are in an unexpected area, the better your chances of knocking off the spotter plane when it strays within half-range. Give some thought to keeping the Wirbelwind unit close to the 105s. You may want to pair it with a 20mm section, for instance.

A third plane-dodging tactic depends upon your fortitude in eliminating the spotter plane as soon as possible. If you are able to hold off firing the 105s for a turn or two while your AA works on hitting the spotter plane, your guns will remain unseen. The AA units would have to be using opportunity fire for the ability to shoot as soon as the spotter came within range. Silencing your guns for a turn or two may be an unaffordable luxury in the light of the situation at the front. However, you might risk an assault unit or two if the trade-off means saving your heavies.

One other means available in your artillery preservation bag of tricks is artillery hex stacking. Place extra units, such as wagons, with any guns that set up in woods or town hexes. The added counters will reduce any indirect fire attacks, possibly saving the guns.

Early occupation of a defensible area on or adjacent to board A is the primary goal of the German battle plan. Preserving the artillery so that the ground troops can slug it out with the reacting Americans is the other priority which, when realized, should lead to a victory for you.

SITUATION #19

The final scenario in the Bulge series, "Patton's Counteroffensive", gives the players a chance to exercise all of their tactical skills in one grand battle. To play either side well demands a firm command of offensive and defensive tactics for ground and aerial combat in the *PANZER LEADER* system. Both players face initial problems which they must overcome through calculation and audacity in use of the strong forces offered.

As the German player, you start in the proverbial hole. Your forces are outnumbered nearly two-to-one by an opponent who has the initiative. In addition, you are forced to set up in a restricted manner and your mobility is threatened by the American tactical air support. On the positive side, you can set up in hidden deployment. Your troops are qualitatively superior to most of the enemy units, and the terrain your troops operate in is best suited to the defense. Your success in making your positives offset your negatives will determine your chances for victory.

A terrain analysis will help you define how your opponent will come in the attack. The three routes into the area are (1) over the hill west of St. Athan, (2) through Wiln with an advance into the central forest, and (3) over and around the hill southwest of Wiln. An attacker swarming over the first route would pin some defenders down from the high ground and shoot up any units moving into or out of the town. The area is easily reached by large forces which would be concealed from observation due to the placement restrictions regarding a four-hex distance from board A. The second path also affords high ground to the attacker; in addition, there are a limited number of good firing positions available to the defender. Finally, a massive American thrust along the third route would be more difficult, but could pin any Wiln defenders down quickly.

If the German avoids holding on up front, the central portion of the mapboard is the most defensible. The wooded ridge east of the main forest would make a fine main line of resistance. Your infantry could engage the American infantry from the covered slopes, forcing the G.I.s to attack at a disadvantage. There are a number of covered hexes for guns and observers. Lastly, and most importantly, the ridge cannot be assaulted in strength until the fifth turn. The less time the enemy artillery has

to shell your troops, the more you will have left at the end of the game.

Your defensive measures for the ridge will depend in a large degree upon what units you have available after the north and south ends of the battlefield have been dealt with. The northern sector of board C, as noted above, would be suicidal for anything more than a delaying force. A mixed bag of Panthers and Mk IV platoons should set up there to deny easy access into the town and the north portion of board D. If attacked in the first turn, their task would be to engage and withdraw to protected secondary positions south of town. Avoid taking casualties at such an early stage by dropping a smoke screen to cover the relocation. If, however, the American player does not open his offensive with an attack on St. Athan, your panzers can shift to cover the region from less forward positions. Send a Mk IV platoon into Einkel to guard the northern approach. The Panthers and other Mk IVs should move onto the slopes south of town, yet still within range. Your northern force would remain in a modified delaying position which allows them to move more quickly to more threatened sectors should the need arise.

The southern end of the board also should be covered by an armored delaying force. Three platoons of Mk IVs hidden in the woods two hexes northeast of the bridge at CC3 can engage advancing Americans when they close within half-range. That particular hex would also be less likely to receive preparatory shelling or marching fire from the advancing enemy armor. The Mk IVs' mission is simply to keep the Americans away from Artain for at least four turns. A 75mm antitank gun section hidden on a wooded slope hex north of the bridge could aid the armor in this task.

The area around Wiln also needs to be held by a delaying force. Three Panther platoons and an 88mm gun section should team up to slow the American advance through the town. The 88mm can be set up with the Panthers in the forward slope hex adjacent to the northern gap in the trees atop the ridge. As soon as American units enter the town, the Panthers' 75s and the 88s should open up in a devastating barrage. The Panthers will then be able to withdraw over the ridge to avoid retaliatory fire.

The engineers have a special mission to perform, which is vital to securing the southern approach on the D board. They should set up mounted in their halftracks so they can dash to the vicinity of the Artain bridge. If the Mk IV delaying force by the other bridge gains them enough time, their destruction of the bridge would close off the entire southern quarter of the map to the enemy. The panzers should be able to hold off the Americans until they can scoot over the bridge just before the engineers blow the charges. You can further protect the engineers by firing a smoke screen onto the bridge at the start of the second turn. A Quad 20mm and a single 20mm can team up to provide anti-aircraft cover once the smoke clears. The AA guns may either set up close enough to cover the engineers or they may be moved into position as the rest of the AA units must do.

As noted above, a panzer platoon which starts the game near St. Athan can displace to Einkel to begin coverage of the northern sector. Complete that defense by marching a grenadier platoon and an 81mm mortar section onto the nearby ridge from adjacent hexes of the C board. A 75mm AT gun can be trucked onto the wooded ridgetop to join them. Such a force should be sufficient to hold any but the most concentrated attack until reinforcements can arrive.

Your artillery positioning is the biggest headache that your restricted set-up causes you. There is no area on board C from which the guns can operate effectively. That fact forces you to relocate them in the face of the American air threat. Here is where your skills at defeating tactical airstrikes will get

an extensive workout.

The first measure you can take to foil aircraft while the guns are in transit is to move them via halftracks, making them armored targets. Secondly, maneuver them in and around covering terrain as much as possible. The third measure is to place most of your AA units in hexes from which they can defend the displacing guns. Three 20mm units and one Quad-20 section should set up along the eastern-most ridge hexes of board C.

Deception should also play a role in ensuring that the guns reach their firing positions. Your other AA units should be transported in halftracks to a position from which they can cover the engineers. Most of your trucks should be left empty, due to the ease with which they can be eliminated. Try moving the trucks and the AA units first. The American player may send his planes in against these decoys, giving your positioned AA units a shot at knocking them out early. Then again, if you know your opponent has read this article, transport your guns in trucks to throw him off. The operative word is "deception".

You don't want to be without artillery support for very long, so place your 75mm guns in the western hexes of the woods below Nece. Halftracks can reach those hexes and unload the guns in the first turn. Positioning your 120mm mortars on the ridge west of Nece will enable them to execute fire missions right from the first turn from a central emplacement. Your troops need not be completely unsupported while the heavy guns get into position.

The 170mm and 150mm units should make for either the eastern slopes of the ridge north of Artain, or the woods east of the hill north of Nece. The former doubles their defensive strength and shields them from ground observation. The latter offers some concealment and places them behind screening terrain. Your confidence in the engineers will help you decide which area to choose.

The forest near Nece is a prime area for your redeploying AA guns. The central positioning makes it easy to set them up within half range of the artillery, while the woods offer cover. Aside from the antitank guns already mentioned, the 88s and Pak 75s would cover the road leading to Nece from the northwest. Either the reverse slopes of the main ridge or the southern slopes hexes of the woods north of Nece offer good positions from which they can wreak havoc on advancing Sherman's.

Your game should progress through three stages. The first stage is the delay in the forward areas while your guns get into place. The second stage is your attempt to knock off as many Americans as possible when they try to make take the ridge. The third stage will probably be a withdrawal of your remaining troops from board C in an effort to trade real estate for time, followed by a final stand on the D board. Since the discussions above of the previous situations have dealt at some length with delaying tactics, those techniques need not be repeated. Several points concerning the second and third stages of our game plan may prove helpful in getting the best of your more powerful opponent.

Eliminating some of the American artillery would be a satisfactory way to even up the odds. The two 81mm mortar units unmentioned until now should perform covert forward observation missions. Set them up within the set-up restrictions somewhere on the hills closest to northern half of board A. Start them marching towards covered hexes on the edge of the board on the first turn. By the time they are in position, your artillery should be set and ready to execute fire missions. Your FOs' calls for fire should receive the highest priority. Keep these spies concealed and calling in missions until they are located and eliminated.

The Americans should be reaching the ridge line by the fifth turn. Concentrate your infantry around the southern half to keep the route over the ridge east of Wiln closed. You do not want the enemy

to slip his armor through the gap and onto the ridge north of Artain. Back up your infantry with concentrated artillery strikes and the panzers which withdraw from the Artain and Wiln delaying forces. Keep the panzers in place on the slopes opposite the ridge until the Americans give up and try elsewhere.

Once the G.I.s see the Artain bridge blown up in their faces, they will undoubtedly get around to trying the northern approaches. Be ready to transfer a landser company onto the ridge south of Merden. Park their halftracks on the reverse slopes and reinforce them with whatever panzers you can spare. Once the Americans capture the ridge, you can try to hold the woods, but in any case hang onto the reverse slopes as long as possible.

The most crucial portion of the later stage of the game will be when to begin abandoning the main ridge line. Quit the ridge gradually, drawing your infantry back one hex at a time while you call in artillery on the vacated hexes. The idea is not so much to hold the ridge but to make it very costly for the enemy to capture it. Close assault only when your infantry has an excellent chance to wipe out the target stack and escape afterwards. You want to inflict casualties and conserve your own troops. After leaving the ridge, your units should defend the woods southwest of Nece, and then the forest southeast of that town.

Any way you look at it, the German player in "Patton's Counterattack" has an uphill battle on his hands. Careful use of terrain, flexibly tenacious defense of the lines of resistance, and clever execution of special missions and timing of tactical withdrawals should hand the American player a bloody nose—and victory to yourself.

As the American player, you are at the wheel of a steamroller. So long as you keep your forces moving in a coordinated fashion, you should have your opponent right where you want him—under the wheels! Your mission is to find and crush the enemy. Your numerous infantry and tank units will find them. Your powerful artillery can then pulverize them.

Chances are that the enemy will realize that trying to hold a forward defense plays into your hands. Therefore, your troops will need to mount a massive sweep operation to contact the enemy's main line of resistance. With three infantry battalions available, you could attack along the entire length of the board at once. However, once you found the Germans, you would have no reserves to call upon should the attack bog down. In the time it would take to shift forces, the Germans could severely maul the troops which made the initial contact. A more contingency-minded plan would be to keep one battalion in Grancelles as a mobile reserve.

With 15 turns to operate, it may seem that your forces can afford to open the offensive anywhere on the board. The strength of the German forces makes the area most likely to hold their main body the best place to begin. A cursory evaluation of the battlefield should show you that the Krauts will find the difficult terrain of the southern half of the area most appealing. The rough, covered terrain is ideal for concealing their numerous forces. Direct your sweep into the southern half of the map to make early, forceful contact with the main German defenses.

The number of German tank and antitank units makes it possible for your opponent to place enough tank killers into any given sector to make anything less than a battalion-sized tank advance foolhardy. Your two infantry battalions tagged for the initial advance should be supported by most of the tanks at your disposal. The Shermans must roll forward *en masse* to swamp the German gunners with targets. Keeping the tanks to the high ground will make the enemy's job that much more difficult.

The high ground south of Wiln is a good first objective for one of your foot infantry battalions and

an integrated force of M4 and M4/76 Shermans. Mount two of the infantry companies in halftracks to enable them to gain the reverse slopes of the hill quickly, unless enemy fire would make a mounted attack beyond the forward slopes too risky. If the Krauts try to hold the hill in strength, unload the infantry on the forward slopes. Chances are better, however, that the hill will be lightly defended—if at all. Your mounted infantry should be able to drive along the southern slopes to the road and to the wooded hilltop hex in the first turn. Their tank support, two companies each of M4 and M4/76 Shermans, should storm the hill with them. One M4/76 company should drive onto the eastern slopes, another should occupy the northeast hilltop. An M4 company must halt on the southern hilltop, while the other should try to occupy the wooded slope hex nearest Wiln. The third infantry company can advance at the double around the northern shoulder of the hill. Reinforce the mounted companies with a platoon each of engineers and machineguns. These forces constitute the southern pincer of the assault on Wiln and the ridge beyond.

The northern wing is comprised of the mechanized infantry battalion, mounted in their halftracks, and a company of M4/76s reinforced with a platoon of M4s and a platoon of M4/105s. The infantry should drive to the near edge of the forest and dismount. Send the halftracks back to Grancelles for the use of the reserve infantry. The mechanized infantry, meanwhile, should move out for two immediate objectives. One company, reinforced by a MG platoon, should dismount on the southern tip of the slopes adjacent to the road. That outfit can sever the forest road in the second turn. Another company, reinforced with an engineer platoon, will dismount near the eastern Wiln bridge. If the Germans try to make a stand in the town, that company can either assault over the bridge or it can move through the woods to capture the other bridge from behind. The third company can dismount between the others and advance to support either flank. The tankers should occupy the slopes overlooking the town from the northwest to provide cover for the infantry and threaten Wiln with half-range direct fire.

After their jump-off, the forces of the southern pincer must perform several missions concurrently. One infantry platoon should reconnoiter the southwest woods. The rest of that company can join the armor in its advance on the bridge east of Artain. The second motorized company should head for the southern end of the main ridge. The third company, still afoot, should move onto the northern slopes in its approach to Wiln. If the town is occupied in any strength, the artillery and tanks should make short work of its garrison. The town, however, should be practically undefended.

Send at least three tank companies towards the bridge southeast of Wiln. They should be supported by the bulk of the reinforced infantry company which skirted the southern shoulder of the hill. The enemy will certainly have set up a tank trap of some nature near the bridge. It will take three tank companies to survive and wipe out this trap.

Having survived the bridge, the tankers and their infantry buddies should move swiftly to liberate Artain. The bridge behind that town is vital to the German defense—and to your offensive. Your forces must brave heavy German fire to reach the town by the third turn. If you fail to gain the town before the fourth turn, there may no longer be a bridge to capture.

Liberating Wiln itself falls to the other two tank companies from the initial advance. Do not allow your units to linger in town. It will certainly be zeroed in for some form of German attack. Get the tankers onto the eastern slopes of the main ridge so they are protected and ready to advance over the top. Meanwhile, your mechanized infantry should be sweeping ahead through the forest. They should reach the foot of the slopes by the fifth turn. Drop

a smoke screen on the slope behind the swamp to safeguard your advancing infantry. By this point, your northern pincer are has taken Wiln and moved within close assault range of the ridge.

The infantry of the southern pincer, minus the company detailed to advance with the tankers' thrust to Artain, must close in on the southern third of that ridge. You will have to mount the infantry which started on foot if they are to reach their next objective in unison with the other company. The foot infantry should be ready to coordinate an attack with the mechanized infantry on the fifth game turn.

Prior to the infantry assault, American artillery should give the likely enemy positions on the ridge a thorough going-over. Call in strikes on all of the open hexes at least twice to quash forward observers. Drop unobserved barrages on the covered forward slopes ahead of the mechanized infantry. Similar strikes can be called on the approach routes on the reverse slopes to disrupt any German troop shifts. A crucial hex to repeatedly bombard is the one behind the ridgetop gap east of Wiln. The Krauts have to hold that route closed, especially if their attempt at blowing the Artain bridge fails. Starting on Turn 5, bombard the hexes just ahead of your infantry and roll the fire ahead of the troops as they advance.

If the German player succeeds in demolishing the bridge at Artain, your forces must redeploy to bolster the ridge attack. The next best thing to rolling over that bridge is to swarm through the gap behind Wiln. In either case, your tankers should make for the ridge north of Artain. Armor established on that dominant terrain feature will make life for the rear area Germans miserable.

Your other weapon for striking the enemy support in the rear are the P-47 Thunderbolts and your spotter plane. You have enough ground forces and artillery to take care of enemy forward units without risking your valuable aircraft on any missions but those aimed at wiping out the German artillery. The sooner your planes can locate and engage those guns, the more of your troops will be around at the end of the game. Get the planes into spotting range in the first turn. Let them brave the potential AA fire in a trade-off for early action. If the spotter aircraft can locate the enemy guns and stay in the air for two turns, your opponent will be in big trouble. If the spotter is knocked out before he can accomplish his mission, however, your fighter/bombers can take over. Send all of them in at once so that some will survive the flak and kill some guns. Concentrate on the heavy guns if at all possible. Use any surviving planes to strafe German transport.

Your reserve infantry battalion, the third engineer platoon, the Stuarts, the scout cars, the AA and AT units, and the remaining Shermans, should fight a two-phase battle. Being reserve to counter any potential German raid on your supporting artillery is the first phase. The three Sherman platoons should occupy the woods north of Caverge to foil any sneak attack through that region. The AA guns and the heavy antitank units should set up in the city hexes from which they can cover both the northern roads and the hill west of St. Athan. The light antitank guns and the Stuarts and scout cars are placed in the wooded areas north of the city. Keep the infantry and engineers in Grancelles so they can mount the mechanized infantry's halftracks and become a mobile reserve.

The reserves should be able to go over to the offensive once the main German line is heavily engaged. Most of these units should conduct operations against the northern approach to Nece. Shell the St. Athan entry hexes and send in the scout cars for a reconnaissance in force. The Stuarts belong right behind them. The Shermans can cover them by advancing onto the northern slopes of the central hill. Having scouted St. Athan, the recon units should advance on Einkel and Merden behind a preparatory bombardment. Let the Shermans join

them, but you may need to drop a smoke screen near the swamp to ensure that the tanks reach covered terrain in one piece.

Your attack along the northern route should pin down any defenders in the area, just as your ridge assault reaches the reverse slopes. The American armor should be scaling the ridge south of Nece in strength. Your artillery should be pounding the Nece vicinity and polishing off spotted enemy units with devastating concentrations. The U.S. air force should have made a significant dent in the German guns and should be pouncing on German transport. Your final blow is a frontal assault on Nece itself.

Station an M4/76 company on the eastern slopes of the bare ridge southeast of St. Athan to draw the fire of the surviving enemy antitank weapons. Once you know where the fire is coming from, drop smoke screens to mask it and send in the reserve infantry. Between the infantry closing in on the ridge, their armor supporting fire from the other ridges, and your artillery concentrations, you should have the German player in desperate straits. Press on and win.

Only one thing should distract your reserves from their triumphant sweep onto board D, and that only temporarily. At some point in the game, the German player may begin calling directed artillery onto your guns. When that happens, you should make finding and eliminating the German forward observers a high priority. You must mount immediate combat patrols along the covered hexes adjacent to board A. You may also need to relocate your most vulnerable guns. You can also pack the hexes with extra units to reduce the effectiveness of the enemy shelling. The reserve tanks should shoot up any likely hexes until the infantry can find and close assault the sneaky FOs and wipe out the threat of counter-battery fire.

When you mount a vigorous, coordinated sweep into the toughest terrain available to your opponent, you should find and pin his forces in plenty of time for your superior numbers to wear him out. Coordination of your ground forces and their supporting units in each step of the plan must go hand-in-hand with concentration of all the assaulting elements to knock out the German opponent.

Conclusion

In working on this article, I rediscovered—time and again—the superb balance of the *PANZER LEADER* situations. The fact that a fresh idea here, or a different angle there, can enable either side to win keeps the game on top of my personal list of all-time great games. If you enjoy a game system which allows players to recreate the historical action, or to experiment with optional rules, force levels or whatever, without having to constantly refer to complicated charts and tables while playing, then *PANZER LEADER* is probably one of your favorites too. I hope this article has given you plenty of ideas to fiddle with in your next action-packed playings of the *PANZER LEADER* battles of the Bulge.



AH Philosophy . . . Cont'd from Page 2

HEDGEROW HELL) and coverage of new offerings such as *PARTISANS*, *WEST OF ALAMEIN* and *HOLLOW LEGIONS* would be *de rigueur*.

So what could the readers expect of the contents. The format would follow that of *The GENERAL*, with minor variations. Two or three pages of each issue would be devoted to alerting the readership to new products and serve as advertising space for the latest *ASL* releases. Since there would be no insert, the 15 or so new scenarios in each issue would be scattered throughout the pages. (Of these, I would like to see at least a third each year deal

with the original system at its various levels.) We would offer an extensive "Question Box" feature, drawing on Mr. Greenwood's and Mr. McNamara's knowledge of the ins-and-outs of these two complicated game systems. The rest of the space would be taken up with articles about the games.

As to the articles themselves, I would hope that they could satisfy even the hardest hard-core *SLASL* fan. They should encompass the usual blend of styles and subjects, including analytical pieces, tactical suggestions, Series Replays, variants. And perhaps we could add a dash of history—articles on the weaponry or actual events depicted in the many scenarios currently available. I would also like to establish the practice of reprinting some of the best articles on *SL* and *ASL* that have graced the pages of *The GENERAL* over the years. How many of you might like to have a chance to read Mr. Medrow's first "First Impressions" on *SQUAD LEADER*, or John Hill's look at how the system was designed? But, the majority of each yearly issue would be new material—articles that will not appear in *The GENERAL*.

How many of you *SLASL* fans would invest time and money in launching such a project. First, to even consider it, we need some idea of how many would be willing to purchase a copy. I fully expect that the annual, even though larger than our other publications, would likely carry a price of \$10.00 (about twice the price of one of our offerings of new scenario pads in the past). The simple fact that it will be much more specialized necessitates this rate. And chances are that it would not be offered on newsstands, although copies should remain in stock for mail-order for a year until the next issue (assuming that enough of the previous one were sold to make producing a new one feasible).

And, at least initially, we'll need more than mere money from dedicated players; we'll need some contributors—those willing to put their thoughts on paper and entrust them to my tender mercies. And, to critique this mass of material, we'll need some sharp playtesters; these will be folk who have volunteered to devote their expertise in the game systems and their precious time to tearing the work of others apart. So, subscribers and authors, the lifeblood of any professional magazine; would you be willing to be one?

If you would, I need a letter from you. If you would be willing to buy such an annual, please write to me; if you have a friend you think might be willing to, show this to him and get him to write. While you're at it, indicate if you might wish to contribute material for consideration or if you'd be willing to act as a playtester of new scenarios and variants. With some collective effort, we can make this a truly universal vehicle for all the *ASL/SL* fans. And, if you've any suggestions or ideas on format or content, feel free to express yourself; I can use all the input available. One last thought to ponder on. I've not been struck with any inspiration for a title for this new product; if you've a bright and catchy idea, I'd sure like to hear it.

Address your letters to me, care of The Avalon Hill Game Company. If I get enough of them, I'll be most proud to announce the fact in a future "Philosophy" column. And if I don't, we will know the time is not right for such a project—yet.

[PS—One last thought just struck me. I would like our long-time readers and the casual SLASL players to know that this doesn't mean that coverage of ASL would disappear from The GENERAL should such an annual publication appear. The same space as now would still be devoted to that star of our line. The new publication is intended as a "little sister"; not an usurper.]



AREA TOP 50 LIST

Rank	Name	Times On List	Rating	Previous Rank
1.	K. Combs	57	2548YOW	1
2.	D. Burdick	56	2248GGGO	2
3.	J. Beard	46	2188IIR	3
4.	J. Noel	10	2168DDJ	4
5.	J. Kreuz	51	2162HGO	5
6.	B. Sinigaglio	42	2152GUJ	6
7.	D. Garbutt	55	2111HJO	8
8.	P. Siragusa	51	2110FHK	9
9.	E. Mineman	27	2072DFG	7
10.	S. Sutton	24	2054KHN	11
11.	P. Gartman	22	2030HHK	10
12.	P. Flory	33	1999EHK	12
13.	P. Landry	31	1997HIN	13
14.	H. Newby	22	1989TJO	15
15.	M. Sincavage	46	1988EFK	16
16.	B. Remsburg	40	1987HIQ	17
17.	T. Oleson	66	1985YZZ	18
18.	R. Beyma	32	1979DDG	19
19.	G. Schnitker	4	1971CEI	20
20.	F. Preisse	54	1967MNY	14
21.	C. Corn	6	1948DEA	21
22.	F. Reese	37	1946IDJ	22
23.	W. Scott	57	1944MKV	23
24.	P. Halfman	7	1932GHO	32
25.	J. Spontak	1	1912CAC	—
26.	T. Deane	9	1908EBB	24
27.	J. Eliason	5	1902EHL	26
28.	M. Rogers	17	1880CEH	27
29.	E. O'Connor	16	1876FGM	28
30.	K. McCarthy	11	1872CFI	29
31.	B. Salvatore	24	1871GKO	37
32.	B. Schoose	22	1871GIM	30
33.	R. Shurdut	2	1860EGL	31
34.	N. Cromartie	42	1838GHO	34
35.	S. Johns	10	1831HFI	36
36.	G. Smith	11	1826FGM	33
37.	D. Mattson	5	1816HJR	43
38.	E. Miller	4	1812HKQ	40
39.	J. Martin	15	1807DFI	38
40.	M. Frisk	11	1798CEI	42
41.	M. Miller	43	1795GHO	41
42.	L. Barlow	4	1786IKT	38
43.	F. Ornstein	40	1786GHM	44
44.	B. Laboon	1	1781OCL	—
45.	L. Carpenter	2	1781CEF	45
46.	K. Kinsel	2	1775GFI	49
47.	D. Kopp	2	1774GIN	46
48.	J. Lutz	2	1766HGP	47
49.	D. Greenwood	2	1756GFK	48
50.	R. Hoffman	2	1753EGM	50

MEET THE 50 . . .

Mr. Tom Oleson is 50, married and father of two, and is an investor who currently resides in Bromma, Sweden.

Favorite Game: ANZIO

AREA Rated Games: AZ, TRC, WAT, PB, NAP, AK, STAL, SL

AREA W-L Record: 197-114-3

Gaming Time/Week: 15 hrs.

Hobbies: Sports cars and travel

Pet Peeve: What seems to be the failure of AREA Championship play, and the stagnation of AREA competition in general.

% Time PBM: 100%

Play Preference: Prefer 50/50

Mr. Oleson is, of course, the player with the longest string of appearances on the AREA Top 50 List, having been a member of the original Top 10 List that first saw light in Vol. 13, No. 1. He embodies what the AREA was founded to promote—high-level play with exemplary good sportsmanship always displayed. His long-time opponents (Don Greenwood among them) consider him one of the most versatile wargamers around, ever ready to try his hand at any competitive game. Mr. Oleson shares a few words on what the AREA means to him:

"As much as the enjoyment inherent in the games themselves, I treasure the friendships I have made among my opponents. I hope to make many more before my time in this hobby is ended."

STORMING FORTRESSES IN THIRD REICH

Strategies and Techniques

By Douglas Chinn

Capturing fortresses in any game is quite a coup, capturing them in *THIRD REICH* is one of the important keys to successful play. Since ground units in fortresses have their combat factors quadrupled, direct attacks at 2-1 or even 1-1 odds are extremely difficult or impossible. Thus, if a fortress is to be stormed, the "indirect approach" may be the only way to do so.

My proposed indirect approach involves a 1-2 (or sometimes a 1-3 and 1-4) attack by land forces plus the commitment of an airborne unit. The trick is to use just enough attack factors so that an EX (Full) or an EX (CA) will cause the elimination of all ground factors in the fortress. Obviously, any DAS air units should be first countered. Then, during the exploitation movement phase, an airborne unit is dropped into that now empty fortress, completing the change of ownership.

For example, suppose there are two 3-3 units in a fortress hex. The quadrupled defense factors total 24. For a 1-2 attack, at least 13 attack factors are needed to remove both defending ground units if an EX (Full) is rolled. If a CA is rolled, the counter-attack odds are 1-3 (6-13), which means that both units in the fortress will be eliminated if an EX is now rolled. According to the percentages listed on page 36 of the 4th edition rulebook, a "1-2, CA 1-3" attack has a 50% chance of eliminating both defending units. Of course, if there is only one defending unit in the fortress, an EX at 1-3 or 1-4 odds will eliminate that unit. However, when this is the case, attacks can usually be made at 1-1 or 2-1 odds which have a higher probability of eliminating all the defenders in one blow.

There are eleven fortresses on the mapboard: three hexes forming the Maginot Line, Gibraltar, Malta, Leningrad, Sevastopol, and the four hexes forming the West Wall. Let us take a brief tour of these fortresses and see why it is crucial at various times in the game for either the Allies or the Axis to storm each.

The Maginot Line fortifications are the most useless on the mapboard. They are most easily outflanked. Perhaps the only one of these three hexes of any real value is Metz. A French armor unit in Metz hinders any German advance into France.

In contrast, Gibraltar is the most important fortress in the game. If the Axis players can take and hold the Rock, it is likely that they will eventually control the whole Mediterranean. However, Gibraltar is extremely difficult to capture. A sea invasion is a practical impossibility since the British player almost always has many of his fleets stationed there. The only reasonable path to Gibraltar is overland through Spain. An attacker can use shore bombardment in combination with a ground/air offensive against the fortress. Thus, depending on whether the British successfully turn back the shore bombardment fleet,

the Axis attack at odds which could be as high as 1-1. Rule 29.414 states that bombarding fleets are not lost if an A-Elim is rolled. Such fleets, though, are affected if an EX occurs. If naval units are part of any 1-2 attack, they would all be eliminated in the event of an EX (Full). Fleet factors are expensive to lose and difficult to replace. But, Gibraltar is probably the only fortress that is worth this expense and risk.

Malta is almost as difficult to storm as Gibraltar. Although only one 9-factor fleet can be stationed there, that fleet effectively prevents any invasions. This is true because any invasion attempts must be conducted before air attacks on naval units in ports. Since Malta is an island, the only other course is with airborne units supported by air and sea. Both the German and the Italian airborne units would be needed to storm Malta. The most likely combination will be to make a 1-2 attack with one airborne unit and then have the second ready to drop in if the defenders are eliminated. Of course, if the first unit is eliminated by an EX or A-Elim, then it will be permanently removed from the game since it is not possibly in supply or stacked with a friendly, non-airborne ground unit. The only Axis advantages for taking this extreme risk are the capture of one more objective hex and the use of unlimited German forces in North Africa. Storming Malta for the first reason is certainly justified if you have a good chance of holding at the end of the game. North Africa, on the other hand, is usually such a minor theater for the German player that, unless Gibraltar has fallen, storming Malta for the second reason is never justified.

Leningrad can be attacked from four hexes. Thus, if there are only two 3-3 units in Leningrad, an 1-1 attack is often possible. Attempting to take Leningrad is definitely worth the risk in 1941 or 1942 for the Axis. First, the German player immediately receives 15 BRPs at the Russian player's expense. Second, the German player receives 15 BRPs, again at the Russian player's expense for each YSS he holds the city (even if he loses it later in the year). The only way to force the Russians to surrender is to knock out their BRPs in 1941 or 1942 so that they cannot build their absolute minimum of 50 ground/air factors at the end of their turn. Thus, capturing Leningrad is crucial for an Axis victory because of its BRP value rather than its being an objective hex. However, if Leningrad is not captured by the Germans by the Spring of 1942, then it becomes extremely unlikely that they will ever take the city. Beginning in 1942, the Russian player can build his two airborne 2-3s in Leningrad and two of his 4-5 armor units if necessary. Thus, a 1-1 attack would need between 40 and 48 factors, while a 1-2 attack which will eliminate all of the defense factors will need 33-41 factors.

Sevastopol can be attacked from only two land hexes. However, it is a much less valuable fortress than Leningrad. It is not an objective hex and there is no BRP loss to the Russians if it is taken. However, if the German player wants to capture and hold Malokop, and perhaps Grozny, he will need to take Sevastopol. The Germans already have enough trouble keeping their supply line across the Kerch Strait free of partisans. The last thing they need to worry about is a Russian armor unit in Sevastopol which will also cut off supply.

The four West Wall hexes of Essen/Cologne, Bonn, Frankfurt and Stuttgart are crucial to the defense of Germany. The most important of these are Essen/Cologne and Stuttgart. A solid German strategy is to put two 4-6 armored units in each of these; each of these hexes will now have a defense value of 32 factors. Fortresses are always in supply, so they cannot be taken by isolation. Enemy zones of control do not extend into fortresses. Thus, the Germans can always construct new units in a fortress if some units are moved outside or are eliminated without the fortress being lost. Furthermore, two 5-6 armor units (having a doubled defense value of 20) should be placed in the Hague. They also will always be in supply. Now, with this defensive setup, any Western Allied ground units on the east bank of the Rhine will be out of supply if they move further into Germany to attack Berlin. The only other Allied option is to build a supply line through northern Italy. The capture of Berlin is crucial to the Western Allies. If Berlin does not fall, in the multi-player Campaign Game the German player will probably end up controlling at least five objective hexes: Berlin, Oslo, Essen, Bonn and Athens. Four of these objective hexes would normally have been assigned to the Western Allies at the end of the game, even if the Russians took Berlin. Thus, breaking through the West Wall, if only to draw German forces from the Eastern Front, is a vital element in any grand strategy for the Western Allies. Otherwise, when the level of victory for each player is determined (Rule 2.34), they will be sure losers to the Russians—and perhaps even to the Germans if Berlin holds.

Obviously, storming fortresses is an important part of this game, the classic grand strategy simulation of World War II. Since direct 2-1 and 1-1 attacks are not always possible, indirect attacks in conjunction with exploiting airborne units are the next best thing. The chances of success are about 50% (plus, in some cases, the risk of permanently losing an airborne unit). But, if the alternative is losing the game, it is a risk worth taking.



THE EMPIRE'S STRIKE BACKFIRES

The Axis Riposte to an Over-Aggressive Britain

By Mark C. Nixon

To defeat a British invasion of Portugal and Spain as a means of activating Turkey by 1942 in *THIRD REICH* ("The Empire Strikes Back" in *The GENERAL*, Vol. 23, No. 4), all the Axis players need do might be to sit back and watch those Limeys defuse their own offensive. Should Germany instead opt to take action against such British overtures, American forces debarking in England in early 1942 will be appalled at sights including an emaciated RAF, a partially unbuilt Royal Navy, and a graveyard of Valentines, Crusaders and recently-lent Grants still smoldering on the plains of Portugal and Spain. ("The strain in Spain sends Britain down the drain.") The GIs won't have long to marvel at the loss of Gibraltar and Egypt though, for they will want to respond quickly to the sound of goose-stepping troops approaching their docks from the direction of London!

I want to present a critical examination of what will likely happen to Nayer Ali's strategy. Each section of this analysis shall begin with a quotation taken from Mr. Nayer's article. This will not be used as a means of nit-picking specific words or taking thoughts out of context, but to provide the reader easy reference to the exact sections of that text to which I am responding.

FOREIGN AID BATTLES

"In Winter of 1939 . . . 12 points of Aid to Turkey . . . deprive Germany a chance of countering in 1939."

Germany can never be deprived of her chance to send Foreign Aid, although she might opt not to send any, especially in 1939 when mobilization and conquest seem more important. Should Britain send Aid to Turkey, even in Fall '39, what smart German player would respond? He would likely welcome such British wastage, while sending his own Aid to Hungary to counter anticipated Russian payoffs to that country.

So far as that goes, Germany would probably never dream of sending Aid to Turkey unless the player holds Variant #7—at least not in '39 or '40. Probably the only event which could coerce her to do so would be what Mr. Ali has recommended: British grants in 1939. Britain could have saved those 12 BRPs or sent them elsewhere. Sending them to Turkey is like telegraphing the plan to the German player. In the highly likely event that Turkish activation fails to materialize, those are 12 wasted BRPs.

Sending 12 more BRPs in '40 and 15 in '41 makes this a total commitment of 39 British BRPs. Germany likely responds with nothing to Turkey, and wins every other Foreign Aid battle on the map; Russia cannot fight that money war alone. As for Turkey itself, Germany has other facilities to shut down such British zeal. Let's face it; if the German player fails to respond in this manner, surely even Mr. Ali himself would admit Britain could back off, at least from her 1941 grant.

ITALIAN DOW

" . . . a rare and an exceedingly foolish move . . . "

Mr. Ali says, all in one breath, that Italian refusal to declare war on the Allies in 1939 would be

"rare" and "exceedingly foolish". Yet that is the BRP expenditure he uses to nail Italy. Isn't it ironic that this course (Italian neutrality) which preserves Italy for the Axis is considered "exceedingly foolish" by one who depends on an Italian DoW to implement his own plans? The only thing "exceedingly foolish" here is reliance on the Italian player to oblige by footing that DoW bill!

Oh yes, Mr. Ali goes on to state that France could declare war, but France could not also take an Offensive option during the same turn. A French DoW is equally as feeble as one by a misguided Italian player in 1939, paying 35 BRPs to declare war only to launch an insipid Attrition. This gets nowhere fast and is precisely the discrepancy a delayed Italian DoW is designed to address. Here, Mr. Ali has not done his homework, I fear. See Marcus Watney's "The Long Road from Rome" in *The Gamer's Guide to THIRD REICH*.

It is Britain who must pay 50 BRPs for a DoW and Offensive option if it is going to happen in one turn (again, refer to the "Guide"). That leaves Britain with 12 BRPs for builds, which means a great many units will still be 'aving a few at their local pubs in England each evening instead of fighting. These units will still be in the British Force Pool. Should Britain opt to spend these BRPs, forego her normal builds and free the Italian from the DoW cost, I would consider it an Axis economic victory even should Tobruk fall in 1939.

CYRENACIA

"The Italian will almost certainly let the attack go through."

If, despite strong reasons not to, Italy declares war in 1939, Mr. Ali's attack on Cyrenacia is well conceived. Hitting the beach at MM19 is a clever move; notice only the WDF need land there to cut supply routes if making that second 4-5 armor unit available in Egypt would allow an Exploitation attack on Tobruk to seal the fate of Cyrenacia.

Unfortunately, Mr. Ali is a bit cavalier in his expectation for the Italian navy to back down in this case. With one British fleet providing supply to the BH on MM19, there are only two fleets in the Fall and three in the Winter to carry out the invasion. British intentions are transparent. The Italian player knows they are headed for MM19; Britain tells him so. The French navy might be split, so why wouldn't four or five Italian fleets set sail? They'll never have a shot at the Royal Navy like this again, French fleet notwithstanding. They might turn back the invasion,

and might even sink some British armor. The British player might move fleets into the Mediterranean from England, but that brings other factors into play which have been examined elsewhere.

Finally, with all this British armor sitting in port, Rome is now receiving transmissions from the same secret agent whose earlier communiques concerning Foreign Aid were read with such delight in Berlin. True, Britain's best opening deployment places two armored units in Med ports, but for them to still be there come Winter, and joined by a third plus a full air wing, is a dead giveaway. How was Italy caught so asleep that she placed a 3-3 and a 2-5 in MM24 in Mr. Ali's first illustration? This is simply poor play. Those units would never be so located in a serious game.

If the Italian were decided upon defending Cyrenacia (as he must to have placed so much there in Mr. Ali's illustration), he would have located both 3-3 units in LL24 backed by air support. The other hexes to the south are immaterial; Tobruk gets the 2-5 and 2-3. If the British player wants to pay 50 BRPs to launch a 1-2 attack at LL24, what Italian would even want to deny him that opportunity?

Make no mistake. I consider three British armored units in Mediterranean ports in Winter 1939 fine grand strategy. Mr. Ali threatens much at no BRP expense. Although this leaves France weak, there is yet time to bolster that country; and this deployment is so threatening, the Italian must make some tough choices. Should Italy end the Fall 1939 turn with only two 1-3 infantry in Libya, how might she defend against Mr. Ali's assault on Tobruk in the Winter?

There are four considerations at play here:

1. The Italian player must defend the "Boot".
2. Should Italy declare war or finish her conquest of Yugoslavia?
3. Exactly what is the British deployment?
4. Should the Italian navy intercept the British fleets?

The first of these seems obvious and has been covered in detail in other articles. And, frankly, as an Italian player I don't even want to seriously entertain thoughts that Italy might declare war in Fall 1939. (Nicky Palmer did in his piece "Germany: The Mediterranean Strategy" in *The GENERAL*, Vol. 22, No. 1—to which I will reply in a later article.)

Should Italy declare war in the Winter of 1939? I would say no, especially if the British have so obviously deployed for a strike. Should Britain bite

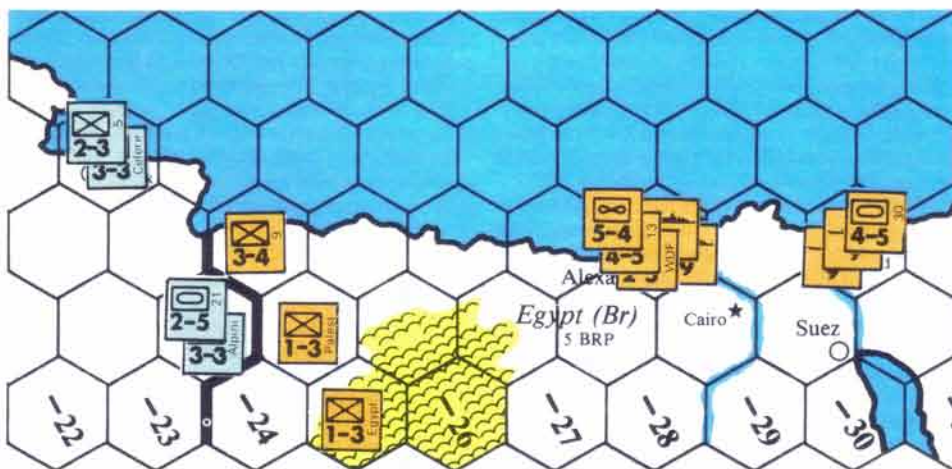


Figure 1: The Italian defense of Libya against maximum British seaborne invasion. This defense requires all five Italian SRs to bring strong units to Libya and to move the 1-3 which began there to Tripoli. Britain can hit MM24 at 1-1 odds only, which would allow her to exploit adjacent to Tobruk.

Figure 2: Alternative Tobruk defense. Here, Britain cannot get the 1-1 on Tobruk unless it also risks a 1-1 attack on MM24, freeing two 4-5 armor units and the air wing to hit Tobruk at even odds. This defense has the advantage of requiring only three SRs, which are the biggest stumbling block Italy faces in early desert warfare. Units at MM24 cannot be isolated unless all three British armored units invade at MM19 and exploit eastwards. Such an invasion force would require four nine-factor fleets, plus a fifth to supply the BH. Notice that two Italian 3-3s are already in Tobruk, ready for the Spring 1940 defense.

the bullet, she spends 50 BRPs and saves the Italian 35. That's a net swing of 85 BRPs which, in case no one noticed, is ten more than Italy has at game start! Britain can have Tobruk at that price, but she still won't get it without a fight either.

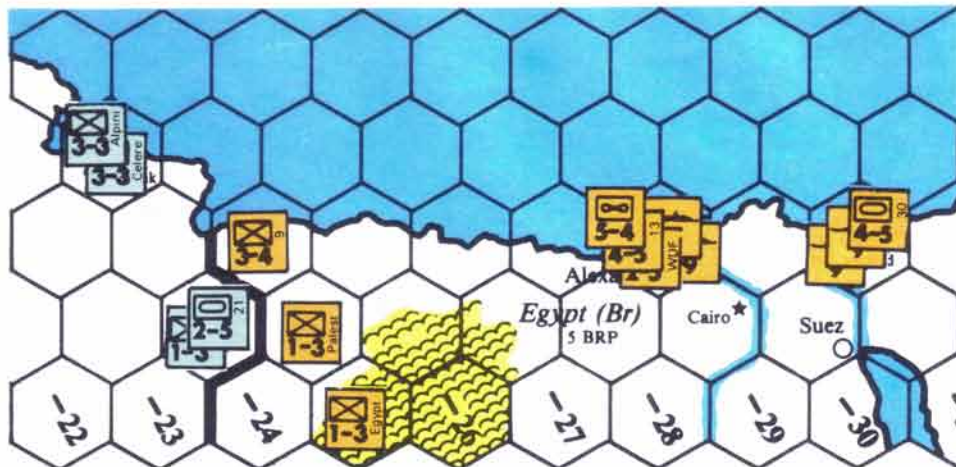
Our would-be Mussolini might view his role in this war as one which already ranks him right up there with the great Roman Caesars. He can demonstrate to the German player how he has siphoned off the lion's share of British strength. The German might be impressed, or use this opportunity to flash around the map propaganda about Rome-Berlin cooperation and promise German support should Britain actually attack. This frees the Italian to complete the conquest of Yugoslavia.

Turning to the third concern, Mr. Ali did not specify British deployment in Egypt, but it is vital to Tobruk's defense exactly how those units (specifically, the armor) are placed. Should Britain wish to threaten maximum seaborne invasion, he might place all three armor units in port. But that allows an easy defense of Tobruk (see figures 1 and 2). On the other end of the spectrum, my Figure 3 shows Italian response to a heavy frontal assault on Tobruk. Both British deployments provide a fair chance of knocking out Tobruk, although the Italian defense should never allow a single-turn victory as did Mr. Ali's deployment in his illustration.

With respect to intercepting the British fleets, it depends on how the Italian player answers this question: "Is this a Navy or a Taxi Service?" The answer, for me, depends on the fare. Facing well-based, numerically superior Anglo-French fleets, Italy would be foolish to intercept. Her navy can be equally useful as a taxi service.

With the fall of Yugoslavia in Winter 1939, if all goes well, it is time to send some troops to Cyrenacia and Tripoli. You want to apply pressure of your own on Britain. Most of the Italian troops remain behind for defense, and possibly an attack on Greece. Most or all of the air units were used this turn in subduing Yugoslavia, and so are not available for DAS in Libya. But three or four units can be SR'ed across the Mediterranean; the Italian navy

Figure 3: The Italian defense of Libya against minimum British seaborne invasion. Only two 1-3 infantry units would be isolated by seaborne invasion at MM19. The other, at LL24, would be hit with a 3-1 attack and Tobruk can be attacked only at 1-2 odds. Tobruk should hold until Britain takes yet another Offensive option in Spring 1940 (which could feasibly be defended with air units from newly-invaded Crete). Note that if the British attempt to take Tobruk with a Spring Attrition, success is less than certain; she cannot occupy that port until Summer, and she will never conquer the rest of North Africa with an Attrition strategy.



can do that much free of charge and still be around next turn to taxi some more.

TRIPOLI

"... Britain must rapidly seize Tripoli while France is still in the war."

"... I leave the tactical details to your discretion."

It seems to me a foregone conclusion that if Britain hasn't sent substantial forces to France, that country won't be in the war long enough for Tripoli to fall in Mr. Ali's strategy. Don't think for a minute that the German player won't lend her ally a hand. The entire operation in Libya will be very expensive for the British; she may never take Tripoli while, to the north her abandoned French ally may be conquered as early as Summer 1940. Russia should be screaming bloody murder by this time.

On the other hand, any Axis players incompetent enough to lose Tripoli without exacting a fearful toll from the British deserves to suffer the consequences. My Figure 4 details what the Axis do for an all-out defense against any British all-out assault. Notice that this situation is reached only after several seasons of British attacks in the desert southeast of the city. Tripoli should not fall in 1940. How long it will be before the Germans hit MM19 or Palestine with their panzers? These are the little tactical details Mr. Ali left to his readers' own discretion! I see nothing better for the British than a 1-1 shot at Tripoli, and even that might be forestalled by a timely Axis counterattack.

Don't moan about Axis over-commitment in the Mediterranean; all we have here is an Axis response to British over-commitment. Better to match RAF factors in the desert than in France. Notice how many airbase counters Britain requires to bring her might to bear on Tripoli? This becomes very important later. Has anyone reading this considered French air assisting British attack; the German player would enjoy watching such an operation from atop the Eiffel Tower in Summer 1940!

In any case, the whole thing is immaterial any-

way. A better way for Britain to attack Libya is not piecemeal, but all at once. Why waste two armored units at MM19 when those same two units might be all that are required to take Tripoli in 1939? Once the British sets up his attack from both Egypt and Tunisia, Italy has only one turn to respond and is able to SR only four or five units into the colony. If only two were there in the first place, his hold in Libya is in serious jeopardy. Figure 5 details an attack which might be worth spending those 50 BRPs on.

AIRBASE, MY EYE

"... William Searight's method as described in The GENERAL..."

I thought everyone knew that this was a joke. Once and for all, let's dispel the "Airbase in the Levant" myth.

Figure 4: Axis defense of Tripoli. Britain can hit the city at 1-1 odds and enjoys an 83% chance of success. She might commit less here—but then so might the Axis. Should England commit too little, the Axis might add panzers and more air cover to increase their chance of holding Tripoli on exchange results. Notice that any British air counterair will not be available to attack, whereas Axis air used in that manner could be replaced by fresh units. This is an advantage enjoyed by the holder of the initiative. British air can be kept out of counterair range, but then might not be available to fly DAS should the Axis counterattack.





Figure 5: Britain deploys to conquer Libya in Winter 1939. Britain sends a full commitment to North Africa and threatens to knock out Libya in one fell swoop. Note how armor in Tunisia and Algeria are located to preclude Italian armor SRing adjacent. The main thrust is at Tripoli for, contrary to Mr. Ali's initial assault on Cyrenacia, that is the objective hex. Tobruk is only a sideshow. Armor in Alexandria might even find occasion to transport to Tunis and add its firepower to an exploitation attack on Tripoli. Note that a fleet must be used to supply those British units in French colonies.

Read Rule 28.15 carefully, which says an airbase placed out of supply is removed and placed on its country's capital. This is straightforward enough; the move does not even *count* as an SR. Since France falls *after* the Allied Combat Phase (49.1), *no* British DoW against Vichy can occur that turn, and *no* British can move from Palestine to Beirut as a means of opening a supply line to any airbase there. Since Vichy controls all the hexes of Lebanon-Syria, that

airbase counter in Beirut is out of supply. Now, don't get excited about a British fleet displaying the foresight to predesignate supply to Beirut. An airbase counter cannot control a hex (7.1-7.4), so no supply can be floated into Vichy-controlled Beirut (27.24). The airbase is out of supply and, per 28.15, goes back to London the very turn Lebanon-Syria goes "Vichy".

Any seeking election to "Rules Lawyer Beyond Comprehension" ranks (that acclaimed institute) might jump for joy upon realizing the *THIRD REICH* supply rules (27.1 through 27.18) mention no such supply sources for "counters", only "units". Adhering to Mr. Searight's pretensions into these semantics, should we deduce that no airbase could ever be placed since there are no supply sources anywhere in the game for "counters", only for "units"? Playing by the rules is one thing; being as persnickety as Mr. Searight is another.

ALGERIA, TUNISIA, MOROCCO

"Algeria can be seized directly . . ."

Mr. Ali doesn't even attempt to disguise his "conquest" of Vichy Algeria with any fancy footwork as did Mr. Searight. Face it, if Algeria becomes Vichy, those British units must SR out of the colony. This is merely a waste of Britain's precious SR capability. Barring some mission Mr. Ali has not identified, those units have no business in this colony

Figure 7: British breakout from the beachhead. After allowing six air factors for interception, Britain can throw 24 factors at the Spanish. This defense forces her to attack two stacks of four factors each in order to have a chance of taking Madrid. Notice that it is impossible to prevent an exploitation attack on Madrid, so this is the next best stance. With luck, Madrid will hold; and even if it falls, Britain might suffer tremendously with exchanges. The 2-5 armor is still in Vigo to cut supply, preventing Britain from attacking a vacant hex in order to set up a 2-1 exploitation attack on Madrid. Here, either the Vigo defense or one of the other two must be taken out before Madrid can be assaulted.

Figure 6: Spain nails the BEF!



Figure 8: Britain enlists help at Gibraltar. The British player brings in the rest of the armor and the RAF, but it all gets shut down. The Gibraltar force goes nowhere, and an attack on Vigo allows a chance for only a 1-1 attack on Madrid. Should Britain take the capital on an exchange, her RAF losses in that attack alone amount to 24 BRPs (which brings the total to 49 BRPs counting DoW and the Offensive option—more than Spain is worth, surely).

in the first place.

Short of flooding them with more units than she can legally SR out in one turn, Britain cannot deny the Axis first crack at occupying Vichy colonies. The rule is clear; any British pieces in Vichy territory get first opportunity for SRs; they have to leave (see the "Guide", pg. 47). Note that in 50% of all games played, one colony will be Vichy; and in 25%, both will. Thus, only 25% of all games will see both become Free French holdings. Britain has to plan on conquering more than Cyrenacia and Tripoli to control North Africa!

THE 1940 BRITISH BUDGET

"Britain should start 1941 in a good position."

Mr. Ali must be a very frugal player to get so much for his money. Look at what he has done with Britain's anticipated 1940 allotment of 125 BRPs:

- 12 for Strategic Warfare Builds
- 12 for Foreign Aid to Turkey
- 15 for a Spring Offensive in Libya
- 15 for a Summer Offensive in Libya
- 10 for a DoW on Portugal
- 10 for a DoW on Vichy, France
- 15 for a Fall Offensive in Portugal

This leaves him with 36 BRPs remaining for everything else. I admit I have been generous and allowed Britain to conquer Libya in three offensive seasons (Winter '39 through Summer '40). Using Mr. Ali's method, and assuming eventual success, it should actually take four, but that fourth might overlap nicely with the Fall offensive against Portugal. Whether Britain could send two powerful units to Portugal while still embroiled in Libya is questionable. But, for the sake of this illustration, I won't argue this point nor, for that matter, additional offensive expenses to subdue any Vichy resistance. Expenses are already too high for the British player to handle.

Look to bankrupt London! Some 36 BRPs will not cover losses, not to mention new fleet construction, while also reserving 24-27 BRPs for U-boat fodder. It certainly leaves no BRPs to support any troops sent to France. Britain is dirt poor; one good Axis offensive in North Africa or some costly exchanges will grind her operations to a halt. Her SW debt might come out of the 1941 base!

So, what is Britain's economic situation for 1939 and 1940 combined? Look at this list:

- 250 for the 1939-1940 total income
 - 12 for SW in 1940
 - 24 for Foreign Aid
 - 20 for DoWs (Vichy France and Portugal)
 - 60 for Offensive Options
 - 27 for SW in 1941
- leaves 107 remaining for all else.

This calculation means 107 BRPs must apply to 130 BRPs worth of new construction if the British Force Pool is to come into play. Obviously, they can't all be built. Furthermore, if we calculate even exceedingly light British combat losses (replaced at 30 BRPs) for six turns of war, there are 53 BRPs worth of the initial Available Force Pool which cannot be built. Should we forsake generosity and escalate, meaning five British Offensive options instead of the four I've allowed, there are now 68 BRPs of forces unused. Notice, for Britain to knock out all North African Axis holdings, secure any Vichy colonies and tackle Portugal, five Offensives would not be excessive.

Should any die-hard players actually use British BRPs to declare war on Italy in addition to all this,



Britain would retain 103 BRPs worth of troops in her Force Pool (meaning she would have built only 27). All of which is a mathematical exercise, since the Force Pool *must* be built if Britain gets nowhere. Oh, she might leave some Replacements, a 3-4 infantry or two, that 1-4 air unit and a fleet unbuilt—but the British player must replace losses, and will find his elaborate plans of conquest have lost all financial backing by late 1940.

AIRBASE PORTUGAL

"... deploy two airbase counters in Portugal."

Watch out! One airbase has already been shown in Mr. Ali's first illustration for that attack on Cyrenacia. I may have saved a second by dispelling the "Airbase in the Levant" myth, which will prove fortunate since two must remain *unused* so they can be built in Portugal. They can't be SR'ed or transported there; they must be newly constructed there. So Britain is limited to one airbase from 1939 until these two appear in Portugal in the Fall of 1941, if the attack on Spain is to include three full air wings.

Refer now to my fourth figure and earlier comments on British chances of taking Tripoli. What happens to those chances if the British player denies himself use of one airbase shown in that illustration in deference to the strategic need to newly construct two in Portugal?

SPAIN

"Madrid must be entered in Winter of 1941."

"Madrid can be taken by two 2-1 attacks."

There is no problem with the concept of attacking Spain. But there is a problem with the fact that

we are supposed to be dealing with ways to keep Britain from "sitting on her hands". What do you call sending two 4-5 armored units to Portugal in Fall 1940 and leaving them there, doing nothing, until Winter 1941? This is evidence of sitting on more than just hands! Berlin will be in a "Constant Party" mood while these bad boys rust on the Iberian Peninsula. But the real delight is yet to come.

Sad to tell, Portugal is not a very effective forward base. Look at it. No supply source, no port and only one city to serve as an airbase. Can any reader guess the kicker? Somebody has—the developers. Portugal's sole inlet for supply, the beach at T10, is adjacent to Spain. Facing Mr. Ali's deployment in Portugal, Spain merely places her lone armor at Vigo and cuts supply to the entire British contingent in Portugal. Poof! They are gone.

Oh sure, the British might try to move units through Gibraltar to open a supply line, or even re-invade T10 yet again if her final two armored units are in port; but look how weak this would leave everything else. (Rule 27.24 explains concisely who is and who isn't in supply.) Even British armor which has just re-invaded T10 could not have made an exploitation attack from a friendly beach, and so are not in supply by that criteria. (Figure 6 shows my Spanish defense against Mr. Ali's force and anticipated reinforcement through Gibraltar.)

Should the British realize only those units on the BH itself can start in supply, she might place everyone there; and of course the air units are always in supply, and the airbases don't leave until the *end* of an unsupplied turn (see Figure 7). Should British forces from Gibraltar threaten, Spain uses my defense from Figure 8. For all her armed superiority, Britain cannot guarantee a Spanish knock-

out. She must rely on the old 1-1 attack, not the 2-1s demanded of us by Mr. Ali.

THE IDLE GERMANY

"In 1941, Britain needs to send the other 4-5 and one 3-4 infantry to Portugal . . ."

Who among us believes that Germany won't respond to this move? This is not "covert action". The British player opposite you has just placed the cream of his armored forces in Portugal of all places, a country which lacks even a decent port to allow SR across the water. It was plenty obvious what was going on when she left forces there from Winter 1940 through Winter 1941. Now she has reinforced them!

This is an open invitation to invade England if ever there were one. The British player has just spotted you a tremendous advantage by placing their army off in the most remote corner of the map they could reach, in effect saying, "there they are, what are you going to do about it?"

As the German, I have five possible responses to consider:

1. Do nothing.
2. Man the Pyrenees.
3. Attack North Africa.
4. Attack Portugal.
5. Attack England.

Probably the only time it would be wise to do nothing would be if Britain had deployed as per Mr. Ali's diagram, such that the Spanish armor in Vigo defused the whole Offensive anyway.

Manning the Pyrenees may be Germany's most likely response. Although it is not as much fun as invading England, at least it is not subject to defeat at the hands of the Royal Navy. The great advantage with this and the following options is the timing. In most games, Winter of 1941 is the turn of the Russian cold. The panzers will lie idle on the East Front, so those operations suffer little if a few of them are absent then. The parachute unit in La Rochelle threatens both England and Madrid, as do panzers based there when supported by additional Wehrmacht forces on the Spanish border. Nothing short of capture of London would be more satisfying than to catch Britain's puny army in Spain. Putting it bluntly, the panzers would shred them unmercifully.

The option of attacking North Africa is also highly likely as British commitments in Portugal, Gibraltar and England consume most of her resources. The British player has little left to defend Palestine, Lebanon-Syria, Tunisia, Libya, Malta and Egypt. Between them, one of the objectives (Malta, Tripoli, Suez or Alexandria) should be ripe for picking. Because of Britain's commitment in Portugal, I am sorry to say I cannot even illustrate any projected defense of the Isles or North Africa because there is none beyond the Royal Navy (which is a major obstacle to be sure). Beyond these fleets, however, Italy can land in North Africa and Germany might invade England.

Looking at Portugal, against Mr. Ali's deployment, successful overrunning of T10 would isolate the British in that country. But since that is an unrealistic BEF situation, this plan is more a curiosity than anything. Germany could not hit the beach against the stacked weight of the BEF plus the RAF. Against Mr. Ali's layout, however, the British army disappears as the panzers pour through Spain into Portugal.

And, at last we come to the matter of invading England itself. "Now, if Hitler has four fully loaded fleets . . ." Contrary to Mr. Ali's caution, "Hitler" need not already have those fleets poised for *Sealion* prior to British reinforcement of Portugal. Because it might well take two turns for Britain to take Madrid, the German player can follow that Portugal reinforcement with invasion preparations, even so

far as to build the two extra fleets the player turn after Britain commits itself to an attack on Spain. Should Spain not fall in one turn, English sands might yet part to the tracks of panzers.

BRITISH RESPONSES

Facing any aforementioned Axis reaction to an invasion of Spain, what might Britain do in Winter 1941? Her army and air force are poised to attack Madrid. The British player can't SR or transport out of Portugal. He can't be certain of Spanish capitulation, which would free him to SR out via Gibraltar. If he intentionally destroys his army, it can't be rebuilt until the Spring of 1942, and not used until Summer. This would yield a chance for Germany to invade England in Spring 1942; those panzers might reach London before the British army.

No, the quickest way out for the BEF is to go ahead and attack Spain. There are three ways to accomplish the transfer: 1) conquer Madrid; 2) kill off the British units with suicide attacks against the Spanish and rebuild it in England; 3) bust through to Gibraltar and SR back to England.

The choice seems simple. If that 1-1 attack on Madrid looks too risky, don't worry. Failure there means that you have automatically chosen case #2 and can rebuild those lost units for home defense. Only if you lack the BRPs to rebuild them should you shoot for Gibraltar, which still costs 25 BRPs for the DoW and Offensive option. Rearguards of your Iberian force may be mauled by the Wehrmacht, but at least England may be secure. Of course, Franco will now be firmly in the pocket of the Axis.

ASSUMING TURKEY

" . . . superiority by the end of her Summer turn and be able to activate the minor in Fall."

This is very interesting. Mr. Ali continues to assume that the Axis players have no idea what is going on. First, he deduced they would not respond to the British army build-up in Portugal; now he suggests that they will permit the fall of Madrid to go uncontested and not notice that the entire British army has taken up residence in Spain.

It is regrettable that Mr. Ali has misread Rule 33.71. Britain must meet the requirements of Turkish Activation "at the start of its player turn"—not at the end. Simply placing enough ground combat factors in the Mediterranean does not do the trick. The majority requirement must be fulfilled at the beginning of Britain's turn. That means that the Axis powers will usually have a chance to respond.

Britain might well denude the home defenses and place all of her 41 combat factors in that theater. But that still won't offset Italy's 30, Bulgaria's four and various other Minor forces holding Yugoslavia and Greece, not to mention the Germans opposing this British insult in Spain. Of course, Britain wouldn't really lay bare the homeland, but that illustration serves the purpose of demonstrating just how pathetic her attempt at activating Turkey really is.

In fact, even over the Spring-Summer 1942 double-turn, British and newly-arrived U.S. forces cannot attain a majority because those new factors cannot reach the Mediterranean until the summer. Germany again has the opportunity to respond. It is preposterous to expect the Allies to finesse their way to a majority.

DREAM PHASE

"Britain will start 1942 with 60 BRPs in conquests . . ."

This assumes all French colonies became Vichy and were conquered, along with Libya, Portugal and Spain. It also assumes that the Germans have not

knocked off Moscow and London while the British armed forces were galavanting around the Mediterranean. I truly don't see any way Britain can lay claim to so much. I believe Mr. Ali has overlooked the fact that this country simply cannot lay her hands on the BRP resources he consumes to attain these goals. This has already been demonstrated clearly in the section on the British budget above.

"The Allies should liberate France by Fall or Winter '42 . . ." . . . Turkey should liberate Bulgaria, Rumania, and even possibly Yugoslavia." I suppose if we count on the Axis players to do nothing this far, why expect them to perk up now? *Of course* they will be in bad shape if they sit on their hands and whine, "what will we do?" *Of course* France can fall in 1942 if German forces walk out of the country. *Of course* the Turks can conquer the Balkans if all they have to fight are Bulgarian 1-3 infantry units.

But what is the point of assuming that your opponent is a mush melon? Would any of us actually enjoy investing so many precious gaming hours against someone who would not respond, even when the entire British army went on holiday in Portugal? Isn't there more excitement to be had bouncing a ball against a wall? At least a wall gives back as much as it takes.

What we have here are a collection of thoughts which must be the culmination of four years of dreaming (1939 through 1942) on the part of a frustrated Anglo-ophile player. Sure, Britain can do a lot in *THIRD REICH* and is fun to play—my personal favorite actually. But these situations will not occur against any competent player. Mr. Ali is trying for too much.

A SANE MOMENT

" . . . preventing what is perceived to be a major invasion."

" . . . attack on Portugal as something to be prevented at all costs."

" . . . landing on the Libian coast as a mortal danger."

I find these phrases quite disturbing. Mr. Ali may be accurate in all three cases, as he mentions three very interesting points. I wish he had written his entire article about these three concepts. Presenting pro and con of his "Psychology of Interception" (or how about, the "perception of Interception") could have made intriguing reading.

Briefly, I like to use my Axis fleets to knock down British SR capacity as much as anything. I would *not* perceive an attack on Portugal as something to be prevented at all costs, for reasons now evident to all who have read this far. And I certainly would not perceive a small landing on the Libian coast as a mortal danger. For one thing, it is not "mortal" at all, and it depends much on who pays that DoW cost—Britain or Italy. My Italians will not foot the bill in 1939, but would wave the carrot of Tobruk at the British to entice them to shell out those 35 BRPs. Any danger of that landing at MM19 is too conspicuous; the British can't fool anyone with that old trick.

CONCLUSION

"This Gambit is conducted on a shoestring."

Mr. Ali unleashes his most accurate statement in his closing comments. I hope to have already justified my view—"This shoestring Gambit will never see the day competent Axis play fails to tie a double-knot of BRP overdrafts in the purse-strings of the British war economy."



NOT JUST ANOTHER DAY

An Overview of D-DAY

By Don Howard

Whoever was responsible for the 1977 rules for *D-DAY* really outdid themselves. They made a close game even better balanced; yes, the Germans have a chance of winning. If someone thinks otherwise, then there is something missing from his pattern of play. Hopefully for both novices and masters of this classic game, the following brief exposition might fill in what's missing, or perhaps add to what's already there. In any case, I'd like to present both sides of the coin and look at German set-up and general strategy as well as Allied strategy.

GERMAN STRATEGY

Possibly the most important step towards a German victory is the initial placement of his units. Here, on the beaches, is his first chance for an unqualified victory. The Allied player could even lose the game here. No matter what happens, the initial landings will determine what shape the Allied drive across France will assume. The accompanying illustration shows my recommended initial placement of German units.

There are a number of key points for the German player to keep in mind once the Allies are ashore. Early in the game, the German player should go out of his way to delay for a couple of turns the Allied advance whenever possible. The goal is to try to keep the Allied player from hitting you with everything he has until your replacements start to make themselves felt. I look at the German replacement capacity as the lifeblood of any successful defense. Once they begin to arrive, the German task is certainly made easier; but they may be "too little, too late" if German losses are too heavy early in the game.

The German must also strive to make his lines as "3-1" attack-proof as possible. It's not really that difficult, although you will have to engage in a lot of shifting of units. Watch to see if a weaker unit can hold a position due to the lack of Allied troops nearby, move it there to free your strongest units to face the Allied might. If Allied strength shifts to face a weak portion of your line, move your strongest units to bolster the line. You must take careful note of enemy troop movements, one advantage you do have over your historical counterparts. Meet strength with strength, and you'll slow the Allied advance to a crawl.

Another crucial thing to remember is that in order for the Allied player to use an inland port for supply, they have to control the lettered hexes around it. Therefore, never give up a port just because the Allies have entered the city proper. Fight for control of the lettered hexes and delay him in his advance by keeping vital supplies from him.

The German player must be *extremely* careful when withdrawing from one line to fall back to the next, especially in Brittany and the Bay of Biscay regions as Allied strategic movement could envelop and trap many of the slower moving German units. You must make sure that you cover their retreat with mobile units or the bulk of your force (the infantry) will be destroyed, leaving a large gap in your lines. This precept is true whenever moving for a couple of turns across a large, open area of clear terrain.

The German player must also learn anti-paratroop techniques. Keep cities in the rear garrisoned, especially the ports. Keep other minor units in back of your main line to prevent paratroops from undoubling a position. Always attack Allied paratroop units when the odds are even or better. They are one of the most potent weapons in the Allied arsenal.

Be well aware of the terrain behind your main line when preparing a defensive line. It can help you decide on where to concentrate your strength, depending on the terrain available to fall back on. For example, if behind your right flank lies a lot of open terrain, a breakthrough there would give up more territory than on your left where the troops can easily fall back to the next river line. Therefore you want to position much of your strength on the right, or more exposed, flank. Judgement in this matter is essential. Otherwise you'll find you've run out of river lines to hide behind.

Beginning in Brittany and working our way across France, we see a multitude of superb defensive positions. The St. Malo-Rennes-St. Nazaire line is the first one the Allies will encounter in Brittany. The German player will almost always be able to establish this line should the enemy opt for an assault here. It can easily contain an invasion for a long period of time, and doesn't leave the Allied player with many options—attacks with low odds or soak-offs. As such, it is one of the most important defensive lines in France. Events at any of the first defense lines (those that are meant to contain an invasion) could easily alter the course of the game. If you can bottle up the invaders for any length of time, your vital replacements will come in much quicker.

Unfortunately, just the opposite is true also. The Germans could give the Allies an advantage by trying to hold on to hold out *too* long on the first line, all the while bleeding themselves white. Careful planning is therefore mandatory when deciding when to withdraw. Don't forget to take into account the fact that you'll probably lose a few units while falling back across the open ground to your next defensive line. Be careful not to get your units trapped by Allied strategic movement. A second invasion could also cut off your troops, making it difficult to extricate your units and to keep the invasion bottled up past the ninth week.

Bayeux-St. Lo-Avranches is the first major line to be defended against a Normandy invasion. This line should also be held as long as possible, with heavy counterattacks if necessary. However you face the same problem as in Brittany—when to withdraw. At least here the German player can fall back easier. But care should be taken to see that every unit has the best possible chance to survive to fight again on the next line.

The line running from Le Havre to Rouen, across to Chartres or Orleans should be this next line, whether retreating from Brittany or Normandy. It should not be the *main* line of resistance, however; force the Allies to get into a position to attack it and then fall back to the Seine before they can. The Allied player must then waste another turn or two regrouping to attack this new position. In this way you can buy a few turns with little loss of units.

The Seine should be heavily defended and "3-1" proof if possible. Counterattacks should be made against Allied bridgeheads unless you risk devastating losses. Don't give up this line prematurely. If the enemy achieves a breakthrough above Paris, don't give up the lower portion of the Seine line until absolutely necessary due to the threat of envelopment. Instead, form a new line along the Marne.

When the Seine is crossed below Paris, your next line should be along the Somme and over to the Oise to Paris. Hex R23 appears vulnerable but if defended by a 6-6-4 or a 7-7-4, the Allies can only mount a "1:1" attack on it. A 5-5-4 unit can hold it against

2-1 odds. Should the Allies take this hex, a counter-attack is easily mounted against the victors by attacking from the five adjacent hexes. Paris and the rest of the Seine can be lost and a major withdrawal from the line is still not necessary. The cities and rivers behind the Marne can provide a hedge-hog defense and buy a few turns for you to prepare the next line.

The next defensive line of importance is the Antwerp-Brussels-Meuse line. Defense of the Scheldt area will slow down any Allied advance, but can't hold out long. This line is easily defended and can be made "3-1" proof in most games (barring excessive German casualties up until now). This line should be the most difficult for the Allies to breach.

After the Meuse line falls, the Germans, for the most part, will be in a hedge-hog line set up in the intricate network of mountains, rivers and other doubled positions near the Rhine. Although crossing this region is time-consuming and will cause many Allied casualties, the enemy will have more initiative than ever. He can pick out his best attacks against your line (which probably won't be proof against 3-1 attacks). The net result is that the Allies will be able to penetrate this line without too much difficulty.

All's not lost, however, for the Rhine itself *can* be made "3-1" proof, but usually the Germans lack the strength to *do* it. This is an excellent moment to seize the initiative. Use strategic movement to isolate Allied units. Try to attack in a manner which threatens their supply sources. Also, use the mountains to your advantage by attacking into the "valley". This should delay a final Allied attack on your units while they cross the mountains on either side of your position. Don't make excessively risky attacks, only ones that you're reasonably sure to win.

Finally, if the Rhine is crossed by the enemy, you *must* counterattack with all your strength immediately. If you can see that the Allies have difficulty getting ten units across the Rhine in the one or two turns they have left in the game, you can safely forget about the few that did get across. Instead, screen them off and delay the rest of the enemy army. Don't forget that isolating the units that crossed the line is as good as eliminating them. This is your final stand, so exert yourself to the utmost.

ALLIED STRATEGY

The first step is, of course, getting ashore. Let's consider each invasion site briefly:

North Sea—Attacking here is a matter of "1-1" attacks and a little (or a lot of) luck. Two infantry divisions each should attack the three northernmost beaches. These attacks will hopefully force the Germans to abandon Amsterdam unless they decide on an immediate counterattack. The latter option may cost the Germans some heavy losses. One parachute unit should be dropped at G11 and two at H12. These units should prevent a defensive line from organizing behind Amsterdam—which the Allies must take for supply or the invasion will go nowhere. A TAC factor should give defensive support to the paratroopers on both G11 and H12. The remaining TAC factors should be used to interdict and delay any strong reinforcements the German player may be sending from other beaches. The North Sea invasion site is a risk at best, and probably shouldn't even be considered unless as the second invasion.

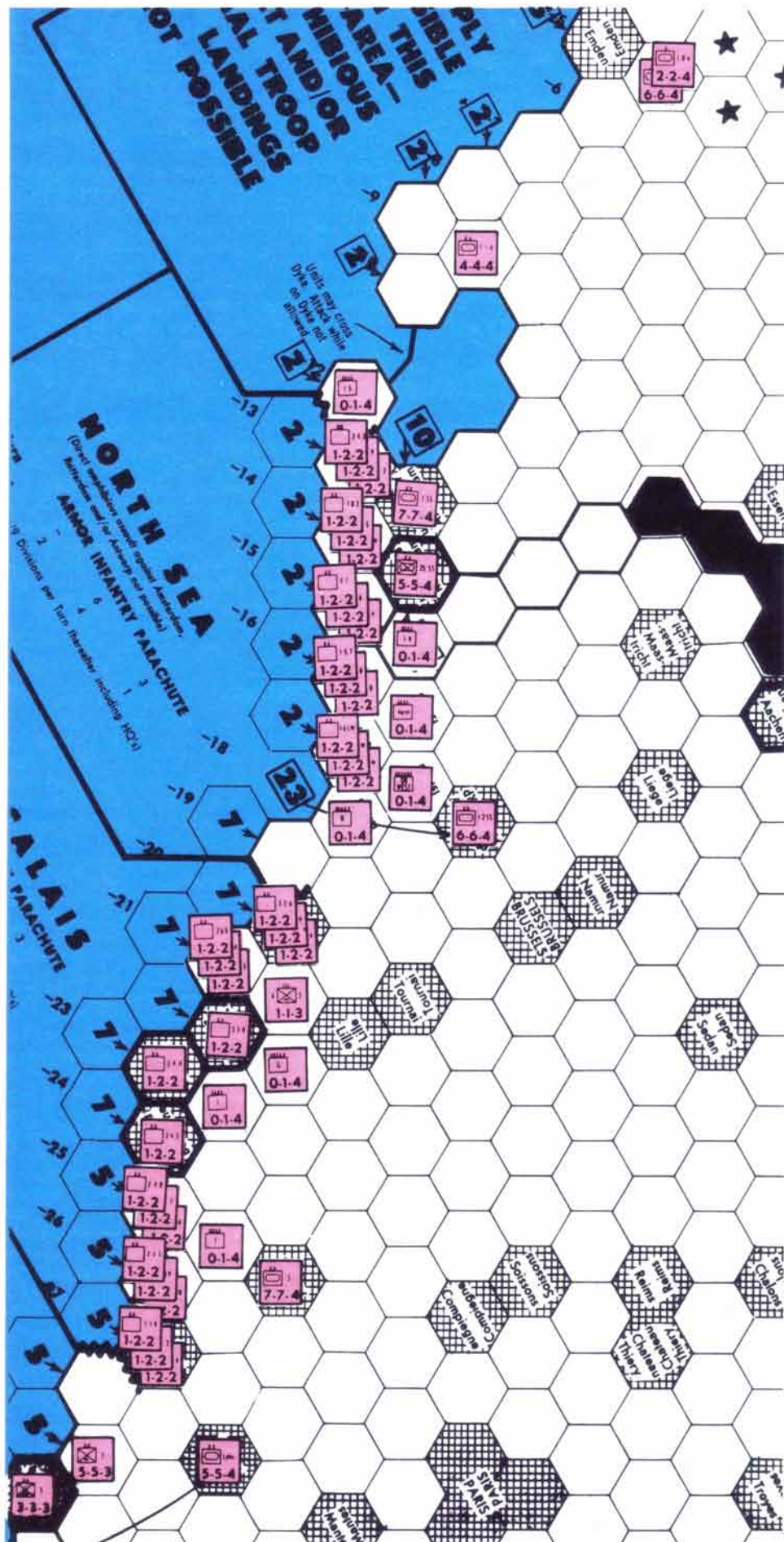
Pas de Calais—Supply being no problem here, your primary objective is to get ashore (not an easy task) and entice an early breakout. Since nothing better than even odds attacks can be had on the beaches, you will need as many attacks as possible. Therefore, have two infantry divisions attack hex L21, two attack O25, and two more attack P26. A single armor division should attack hex M22, supported by a TAC factor, at even odds. A similar attack should be made against N24. The last infantry unit should make a "1-2" attack against M23. One parachute unit should land in Lille and the other two at O23, all of which attack the German headquarters at 9-1 odds. The result? Well, hopefully you troops won't be scattered and dispersed on the beaches (which often happens) but will be able to support each other. If the attacks on either flank work, the Germans will have to give up important cities or desperately counterattack. The paratroops will deter the Germans from setting up a defensive line in the gap. The remaining TAC factors should give them defensive support, also supporting other units and/or interdict German reinforcements. Is this beach invadable? Yes, but most gamers hate to rely on 1:1 attacks (even though you're bound to win some of them). Better to wait until the second invasion.

Le Havre—Land two infantry units at hex Q28, one of which will soak-off against Dieppe at 1-3 odds. The other one will attack in conjunction with two infantry units (in the sea at Q29) and the paratroopers (one division of which has landed at S29 and two at S30). These will attack 5-5-3 unit at 4-1. Two more infantry divisions will assault the Le Havre fortress supported by a TAC factor. The paratroops have eliminated the retreat route of the 3-3-3, raising the chance of eliminating this unit. The Allies are able to land a relatively strong force here but note, due to the limited width of the area, that the Germans can easily put off the invasion. It is also near much of their reserve power, which means that they won't hesitate to attack your positions—and the attacks won't be mere pinpricks! It is my opinion that most invasions here will last several turns at best. Again, use the extra TAC factors for defensive support and/or interdicting German reinforcements.

Normandy—Two infantry units should amphibiously assault Bayeux at "1-1" to try to break this city line early. Two more infantry divisions should land at R34 and two more S35 to make a 2-1 attack against Carentan. One parachute unit should be dropped into Cherbourg and two parachute units onto Q33. These attacks aren't exactly guaranteed either, but at least the paratroops will hold the peninsula if the infantry completely fail. All TAC factors should interdict German reinforcements.

Brittany—Two infantry units should launch an assault against Avranches at even odds. This is risky, but it could help an early breakout although, even if successful, heavy German counterattacks will likely retake the city. But not before they have delayed the enemy long enough to build up a good-sized strike force, however, and kept much of the German strength out of the main front where a breakout is probably occurring between Rennes and St. Nazaire. In case that attack doesn't work, however, the remaining units shouldn't open themselves up to a counterattack. Land two infantry units on V40 and drop two parachute units on W41 (which is usually a relatively safe position). Delaying the northern reinforcements with TAC is very important in this invasion (this same precept goes for invasions in the Bay of Biscay and Southern France also). An invasion at Brittany probably holds the best chance of success against this representative German defensive set-up.

Bay of Biscay—Supply must be gained as soon as possible to even think of driving to victory across France. Therefore, two infantry units must make a "1-1" assault against La Rochelle right away. A



Above: The Eastern Coast; not shown are two 3-3-4s in N9.

Right: The Western Coast; not shown are three 5-5-4s in X14.

viable alternative would be an even attack against Bordeaux, but success at La Rochelle cuts off the units at Bordeaux anyway; but, then again, an exchange at Bordeaux would gain the city on Turn 2 while such at La Rochelle would not. If unsuccessful the first turn, a carpet bombing attack must be used to gain supply or the invasion is lost. The other infantry unit should land at HH42 and the parachute division at HH41. These two units should each be given TAC defensive support. German reinforcements should be interdicted when possible.

South France—An uncontested beach! Troops should land as close to the "valley" as possible. Interdict German units advancing toward you. Move as far as possible using strategic movement (don't forget to leave HQ units in Marseilles). Unfortunately, this isn't as easy an area to penetrate as you might think—especially since at the end only a small area of the Rhine can be crossed due to supply. It will make for an interesting game though. But, all in all, the German player can pretty well plug up all the routes which gave access to Germany.

Looking at the fighting on the continent, there are some general suggestions to be made to novice players. The key to Allied strategy is airborne operations. They can break line after defensive line, and the threat they impose can keep the German edgy. Their improper use can cost you the game. You should utilize your parachute force again and again. Don't risk them in an exchange situation unless you're desperate. Try to keep other friendly units in adjacent hexes to discourage counterattacks aimed at them. This is sometimes difficult but can usually be accomplished with an advance after combat. You must give your paratroopers defensive air support when exposed; even if they are not exposed, the German player may make a low-odds attack on them, so defensive support is never amiss.

The Allied player should not exert all his energy going after the German strategic installations. While having a few replacements is nice, that's all you're going to get—a few. The game will be won or lost with the troops you have to begin the game, and the scheduled reinforcements. The strategic installations produce too small an amount of replacements to make it worthwhile diverting 36 factors down to Brittany. In other words, if you have already decided to attack Brittany, by all means attack the installation there as part of the normal course of play. But if you are hitting the Pas de Calais, don't waste time and forces diverting units from the front to Brittany.

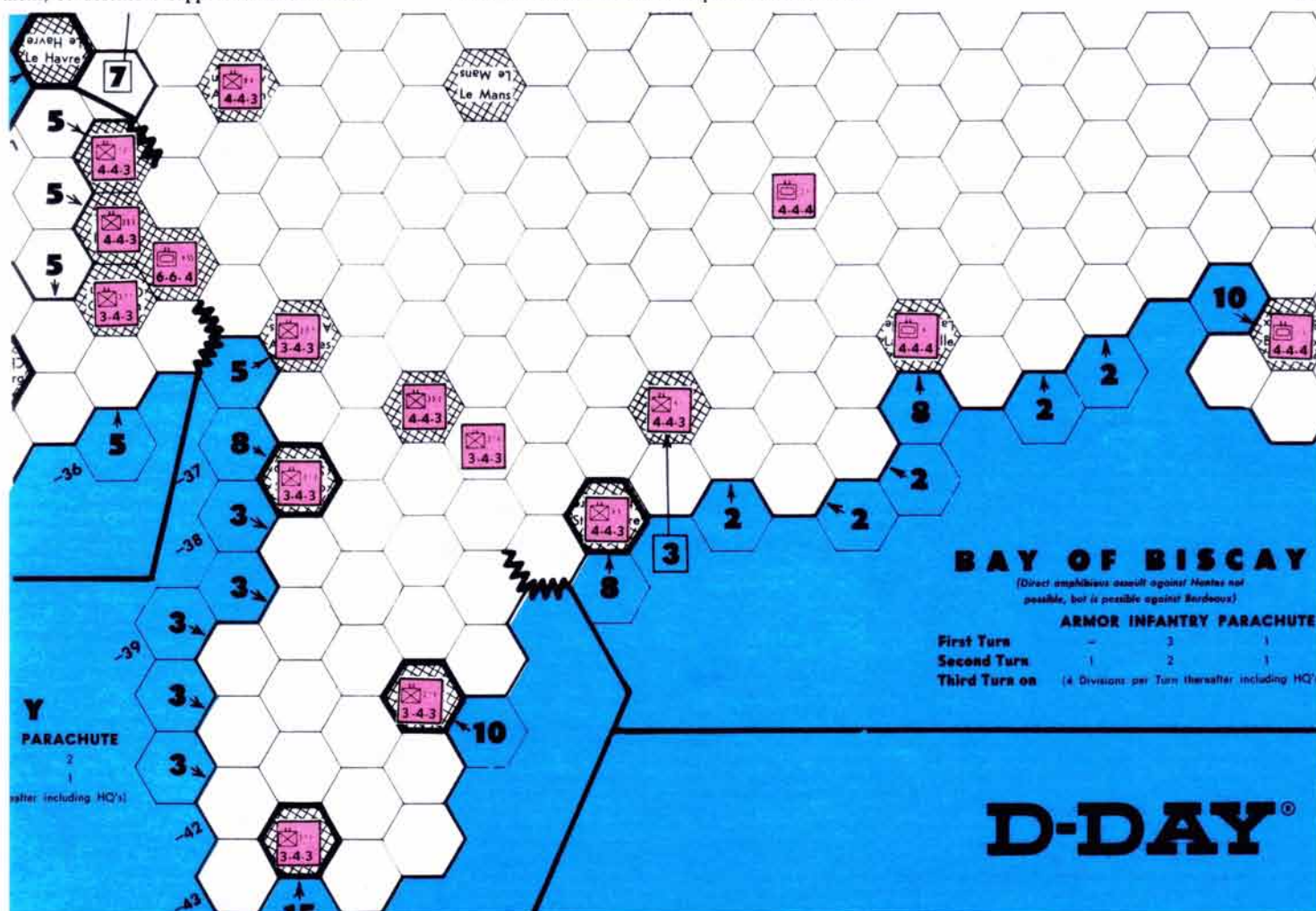
The first turns of the game are important in that these will decide whether or not, and when, the Allied player will make his second invasion. A second invasion should be made in one of two cases: a) you see a great chance to crush the German defense entirely, or b) in desperation. If you're thinking of making another invasion just to tie down some enemy units or in hopes of winning a big "1-1" attack once in the game, you should think twice. A second invasion is often an easy way for the German player to eliminate or isolate a portion of your force. It was hard enough to get ashore the first time when you could pick his weakest beach to invade. But now all that's left will be the ones he hoped you'd pick the first time; especially now even the Allies can't wait until the right moment but must come ashore between Turns 9 and 16! The troops you might squander in a second invasion can often be put to better use in the main lines when your numbers are thinned late in the game. As you near the ninth week, you should analyze how the first invasion is progressing and if, when, and where a second invasion will take place. If the first invasion is not proceeding satisfactorily, then a second invasion should be made if manpower allows. If the

fight is going well, it is usually better not to divert units in a speculative second invasion. Obviously your decisions about the second invasion are a key factor in the game.

CONCLUSION

Both players have an equal chance at winning this game. It is one of the few classic games of which it can truly be said that, given two perfect players, any individual playing will be decided by the dice. I would hope that the above hints and comments have helped your play reach that stage. And, if that doesn't help, perhaps you might want to read over some of the past fine articles on *D-DAY* that have appeared in these pages. Try the excellent in-depth introduction to the new edition by Joel Davis (in Vol. 14, No. 6) or Jim Stahler's look at strategy (Vol. 18, No. 2). And if all this doesn't help, perhaps you might want to try a few experimental options rules.

One of the nice things about a game such as *D-DAY* is that it lends itself so readily to experimental rules—not being too long to play or so complex that one change leads to a host of ramifications that demand still more adjustments. I have, for instance, added the Luftwaffe to some of my playings. To be more specific, try giving the German player six (6) TAC factors to intervene with; these are used in the same manner as Allied TAC, except that only one may be allotted per turn and only six are available throughout the game. For other variations, I've devised rules for Allied Naval Gunfire, Commando Raids (which affect German replacement factors), and Allied Air Transport, try your hand at the classic *D-DAY* and see what you've been missing.



Dear Editor:

My comments (concerning Vol. 23, No. 4) of *THE GENERAL* are quite late this month. There is a very good reason for this, of course. I received my copy of said issue on July 23, roughly a month after it was released. I called your subscription department on June 30 to inform them that somehow I missed out and the person answering the phone assured me he'd get right on it. July 20 and still no *GENERAL*. Another call and another assurance; this time I actually got my copy. It wasn't worth the wait.

I quickly perused the table of contents and, with the exception of "Bambi's War" (ridiculous as hell) and the one on *STELLAR CONQUEST*, it looked like a real winner. Then I read the articles.

"The Empire Strikes Back" was the biggest crock of crap I've read since Mr. Ali's last article on the Russian front. This man makes assumptions that just aren't true. Perhaps there are good 3R players who set up asking to be surrounded, who don't intercept loaded-up invasion fleets, etc. However, I don't think so. I invite Mr. Ali to invade Spain with the Brits. This strategy is so implausible against a competent opponent as to be laughable. My rantings are, of course, subject to argument. Mr. Ali's flawed strategy and misguided efforts are not. If executed the way illustrated, "The Empire" would be heading to the force pool as they are all out of supply.

I pray when playing 3R competitively that my opponent tries some bonehead strategy like this. It has been my experience that if Britain is taking Africa in '39, heavily garrisoning Malta and Gibraltar as well as invading Portugal and Spain that there's little left to garrison old Britannia, much less give the French the hand they desperately need. There are few things as satisfying as watching Britain use all its fleets as it tries to be another Germany, and then invade the homeland in one-fell swoop.

Concerning the lead article, "Grand—and Grandiose—Strategy", this piece was so generic that had you substituted 3R for *EIA*, it would have been just as valid. Let me see? Protect your supply lines (wow!); use terrain to your advantage (why didn't I think of that); build as much cavalry (armor) as you can. And, referring to the "Royal Navy" article, if there is one game that has sufficient scenarios it must be *WS&IM*. Ten pages of the magazine!

Wait, there's more . . .

I've already mentioned what I thought of "Bambi's War" and "Fate of Empire". I have to admit I didn't read the SC article. At any rate, they ruined the theme of the issue.

On the plus side—and there is one—I felt your editorial was insightful and a huge step above what it usually contains. "We May Frighten Them Too Much" was also well done and appeared to me, a novice *W&P* player, an excellent strategy.

Please keep in mind the point of this letter is to help improve *THE GENERAL* and is not a personal criticism on you or the authors. (Well, perhaps in the case of Mr. Ali, it is a personal criticism.) I hope *THE GENERAL* returns to its former greatness.

Tom Slizewski
Thornton, Colorado

I receive a certain number of similar letters after each issue of *THE GENERAL* reaches the hands of the readership. As is usual with such, the writers prefer to criticize and decry, but rarely respond with an article reasonably stating their challenge to an author's strategy (see Mr. Nixon's piece in this issue for an example) or with a piece to fill in the gaps that they perceive. It is, as ever in our world, much easier to criticize than to do. As for the "theme" of Vol. 23, No. 4, I thought that it was rather clever to use articles all dealing with "empires"—except, of course, the filler piece on *YELLOWSTONE* (which dealt only with a kingdom—the animal one).

★★★★★

Dear Mr. Martin:

I would like to pass on a correction and a few clarifications regarding the Nicaragua article ("Revolution Against the Revolution" in Vol. 23, No. 6 of *THE GENERAL*). The article cited in my conclusions on Page 22 is "Sandinistas in Power" by Jiri and Virginia Valenta in *Problems of Communism's* September/October 1985 issue. I heartily encourage anyone truly interested in Nicaragua to read this balanced and scholarly, though readable, work.

Letters to the Editor . . .

"Revolution Against the Revolution" was written in August 1986, and all data on current force levels and equipment were for that month. The article was finished before the Iran-Contra scandal, and as such my information on contra arms procurement during the period in which US aid was cut off was certainly incomplete, although it was as complete as possible at the time without recourse to unverifiable innuendo and accusations.

Also, the contra movement has become even more of an FDN operation, with Adolfo Calero becoming the premiere contra leader. The Nicaraguan economy continues to deteriorate, and neither the USSR nor Cuba seem willing or able to supply the massive transfusions of aid required to head off a complete economic collapse.

James P. Werbaneth
Allison Park, Pennsylvania

★★★★★

Dear Rex,

I find it troublesome that the average human seems to be rather stupid (and sometimes bent on staying that way). As such, I am always deeply grieved to see the common, or "lay", man mis-led or mis-informed on a subject of sufficient complexity or sufficiently esoteric as to make it impossible for him to discern the falsehood. I feel the subject of aerodynamics fits this description, and Mr. Uhl's attempt at explanation of it deserves the title of "mis-information". I feel it is your duty to now publish a disclaimer to this effect.

This is the second draft of this letter. In the first, I endeavored—as briefly as possible—to explain the fundamentals of aerodynamics. This effort was sorely taxing on my abilities and was far from brief. Perhaps this was the problem Mr. Uhl fell into, finding that his ability to understand exceeded his ability to explain; however, I rather think that he does not fully understand and that his admitted "cocksureness" led him to take a very complex subject far too lightly. His explanation of vector addition is sound and well carried out. His definition of the four major forces affecting an aircraft is good. After that however . . . I will try to touch quickly on some major points:

First, we must hurdle some difficulties. It is easier to consider an aircraft at rest in a moving stream of air than it is to consider an aircraft moving through static air; to accept the equivalence of these two requires a lengthy proof (which I won't attempt) or a blind leap of faith (jump, Blinky!). The next difficulty lies in explaining air pressure. Air pressure consists of static pressure which acts in all directions (like air in a balloon) and dynamic pressure, which acts only in the direction of air flow (this is the force you feel on your hand when held out the window of a moving car). These added together make "total pressure", which will remain constant for our discussions. The third difficulty is to grasp that an airplane does not follow its nose, but can move left, right, up or down without turning or pitching and that doing so means the airflow no longer is flowing from straight ahead. When the air blows from below, it increases lift; when it blows from above, it decreases lift.

Dynamic pressure is proportional to the square of speed and the direction is the same as airflow. There are many kinds of drag, but mainly drag consists of dynamic pressure pushing on the plane and this increases, then, with the square of speed. Mr. Uhl's explanation of lift is very poor. The shape of a wing causes air moving over it to move faster than that moving under it. This causes the dynamic pressure above to be higher than that below, but since the air is moving parallel to the wing surface, it does not push against it. Since total pressure remains the same however, static pressure is less above the wing than below the wing and this presses in all directions—and therefore against the wing! Since it is pushing harder from beneath, the net force is "up". Lift is not "re-directed drag", but instead causes "induced drag" because as the air pushes up on the plane it is, in turn, pushed down by the plane (Newton's third law) and this causes drag. Because dynamic pressure increases (and static pressure decreases) with the square of speed, lift is proportional to the square of speed.

To use Mr. Uhl's example, a plane in steady, level flight increases its throttle setting. The plane *does* increase speed; this increases drag until it equals thrust. It also increases lift, which causes the plane to climb; this increases the air flow from the top of the plane, decreasing lift. It will climb at a rate where the extra lift gained from the increased speed equals the lift lost from the angle of air flow. The elevator is unaffected; the nose of the plane goes neither up nor down, but stays level with the ground.

Next I would like to mention the (horizontal) tail and elevators of the plane. The tail of the plane is like the wing and produces "lift"; the elevators change the shape of the tail and allow it to produce more or less lift and to produce it either up or down (the flaps and ailerons perform the same function for the main wing; the flaps cause an increase in lift; the ailerons allow for an increase or decrease in lift and are used in conjunction to increase lift in one wing while decreasing it in the other, thus rolling the plane). Now, we use our ruler as a plane. The tail is marked "11", the center of mass is "6". Our lifting force is one finger for the main wing and another for the tail (the tail force acts at "11"; the center of lift changes during flight). If we put the latter at "6", we don't need tail lift. If we put it at "5", we need tail lift; if at "7", we need negative lift at the tail. If we now increase the force down on the tail, the nose goes up; if we decrease it, it goes down. We can push up or down on the nose instead of the tail. (Horizontal noses are called "canards", and are coming into vogue, but the idea was first used by the Wright brothers.)

The image of modern jet fighters standing on their tails and accelerating straight up has led people to think that a plane climbs via engine thrust; this is primarily not so. Instead, the plane increases its lift, and it does this primarily by pitching the nose up so that air flows at it from beneath the wing. When the plane turns, it rolls its wings to change the direction of lift, and then uses rudder and elevators to tip the nose in that direction, causing air to flow from beneath the wing, increasing lift. The angle of bank determines the proportion of lift that is used to turn; the elevators, rudder and speed determine the total lift. The faster a plane is moving, the more lift it must use to make the same radius of turn. To turn more tightly, a plane must either use a greater proportion of its lift (greater bank) or increase lift (by using rudder and elevators); this reaches a limit because the wings can only generate so much lift before snapping off, so the elevator and rudder must be used lightly when high speeds are already causing high lift. Also note that the bank angle determines not only how much lift will be used in the direction of the turn but also how much will be used to counter-act gravity; if this is greater or less than gravity, the plane will climb or dive while turning. I make special mention of this because most game designers are familiar with "airplane drivers" (not pilots) who are taught to fix the tightness of their turn with bank and then match lift (speed, rudder, elevators) so that the proportion of lift in the vertical direction is exactly equal to gravity, resulting in constant altitude; however, it is entirely possible to gain the same turn radius with less bank (and more lift, resulting in a climb) or more bank (and less lift, losing altitude). A plane may turn with 90 degrees of bank, but generates no lift in the vertical direction and cannot maintain altitude (or would have to generate an infinite amount of lift—zero times infinity taken as 1g, here). A final point on all this—all this increased lift causes increased "induced drag". This makes the conversion of kinetic energy to potential energy possible as the plane increases lift to increase potential energy and thusly increases drag which dissipates kinetic energy at the same time.

In closing, I would like to say that I don't think Mr. Uhl's lack of a complete grasp of aerodynamics in any way invalidates him as a designer of an air game, nor that it precludes him from making a reasonably simulative game (perfect simulation would be truly ghostly to play), though I have not seen *KNIGHTS OF THE AIR* to judge either way. My objection is to him taking the soap box and professing to teach a subject which he either does not grasp or cannot explain, to the detriment of those readers who are thereby unwittingly confounded.

My final comments are on game design. I have noticed a very annoying shift in game design, especially in tactical games, to treat everything beyond the immediate control of the local commander (i.e., the player) as random. These things are not random, and furthermore may well be known if not controlled! A die roll is not a good simulation of anything except a die roll; anything less than total randomization will be poorly represented. There are also two very bad effects: it heavily (and unjustly) penalizes the unlucky gamer, and it takes control of the flow of the game out of the hands of the players and entrusts it to the dice. *ASL* is the perfect example of this trend, as the dice are consulted on virtually everything and are heavily relied upon to create a "fog of war". This is the worst use of dice; it keeps both players equally informed of all events at all times. Perhaps your only task does begin the scenario out of ammo, but only you should probably know this while your opponent may never find out. It is also very irritating to watch your main attack floundering on a series of malfunctioning ordnance and failed morale checks and uneasily accurate enemy fire while your pitifully weak feint rolls critical hits and KIAs, reacting to enemy fire by generating leaders and heroes, while your opponent's own attempts to buttress the area is cut short when his own air support mistakenly guns down the reinforcements. A game should be designed to be played by the players using dice; not played by dice using players like *ASL*.

Well, I could say more, but I've already said much. I hope that I haven't been unduly negative, although that must be partly so as this letter was inspired by negative feelings. I am by no means totally negative about what you have been doing, but perhaps a little less pleased than formerly. I'm certain that you can correct this if you so desire.

Frank Weir, Jr.
Clarion, Iowa

★★★★★

Dear Editor:

I was reading through the last issue of *THE GENERAL*, and I was very pleased to find the new scenarios for *WOODEN SHIPS & IRON MEN*. I have been wanting to fight these battles for some time, and now I can. Deep thanks to your magazine, and to the author.

There is one glitch I would like to correct, however. The HMS *Glatten* was an unusual vessel—for two reasons. For one, she was commanded by Captain William Bligh, who was to become famous at another time in command of another vessel. The other, one that affects the game, is that she was no ordinary 50-gun SOL, but an Indian, with decks reinforced and gunports cut for fifty 68-pounder carronades. So, you see, the scenario chart is not correct. I would (since it was said that the *Glatten* had the firepower of a hundred) recommend ten squares of carronades on each side, but no guns.

James O'Gray
Bremerton, Washington

★★★★★

Gentlemen:

While I like the idea of nuclear weapons in *BLITZKRIEG*, I did not like "Total Krieg" (Vol. 23, No. 3). It lets less-powerful nuclear charges inflict more damage than the more powerful ones (a .5 to 50 kiloton blast is given the power to permanently put a port facility out of commission, while a 100 to 500 kiloton blast only neutralizes it for a turn); its NBC Repercussions Table is set up so an attack on the most distant, insignificant minor country hex can result in an earth shattering thermonuclear war while an attack against a major power non-city hex cannot; its biological attack rules are two-faced, allowing a mere 38.8% chance of launching a successful biological attack; and it totally ignores the new units presented in "Blitzkrieg '85" (Vol. 21, No. 6). The attack helicopters that "Blitzkrieg '85" presents, for example, should be able to launch any NBC attack that a BA can (or at least that TAC can). And the CV, BB, escort and submarine units should be able to launch any NBC attack, period. If future *BLITZKRIEG* articles are printed by your magazine, please be sure that their authors add an ounce or two of common sense to their writings.

Kenneth Burke
West Hartford, Connecticut

LITTLE THINGS MEAN A LOT

Tactical Nuances in FORTRESS EUROPA

By James M. Lutz

As a simulation of the last year of World War II in Europe on the Western Front, *FORTRESS EUROPA* captures many of the intricacies and subtleties of that conflict. The basic tenor of the game requires that the Allies successfully land in France or the Low Countries, break out of the beachhead, and then march on Germany, ultimately capturing enough objectives in sufficient time to win the game. The Allies have ample troops and greatly superior airpower available to achieve this goal. The German player will be on the strategic defensive throughout the game. He may have an opportunity to try to crush the initial Allied beachhead, and late in the game the return of the "Panzer Reserve" will give him one last shot to go on a major offensive that can delay the final conquest of German cities long enough to bring about a victory for him in the end. For the rest of the contest, however, the German player will only be able to undertake limited offensive actions. Such limited counterattacks can have important strategic consequences (such as protecting the last U-boat base or V1 sites), but they are highly unlikely to lead to destruction of the Allied armies.

The following comments will concentrate on various tactical aspects of the rules (2nd Edition) for *FORTRESS EUROPA* and how they can influence the decisions of both players, as well as the outcome of the game. This tactical commentary, like any, will also have some obvious strategic implications at times, with "strategic" taken to mean effects that will contribute to winning or losing the game as opposed to some particular battle. As usual, enough tactical mistakes can lose the game, while good tactical choices only improve the chances of victory. Most comments about the choice of initial invasion site by the Allies and the initial German setup will be avoided since these aspects of the game have been covered in earlier articles in *The GENERAL* (see especially Vol. 17, #4). Rather, the emphasis will be on combat situations, the effects of terrain on combat, supply concerns, specialized units other than the conventional infantry and armor, and on the role of airpower. All of these topics involve some relatively subtle elements of design that can play a role in the outcome of the game (some of which I learned the hard way through the "courtesy" of my opponents).

GENERAL COMBAT SITUATIONS

Usually combat attrition in the game will work to the advantage of the Allied player. German replacements tend to be fewer, and in most cases the German player will suffer significant casualties due to the fact that the Allied player can mount high odds attacks with air support. DE results on the die rolls become much more likely. In many games, the Germans will face a largely intact Allied army backed with plenty of accumulated replacements to make up for any losses. Under these circumstances, even 3-1 attacks will not be inviting to the German player. An E2 result in particular works to the Allied advantage. The possibility of a one-sixth chance of an E2 with 3-1 odds may more than offset the one-sixth chance of a DE (unless the unit being attacked is particularly important of the defenders are surrounded). The German player should normally avoid set-piece battles with the bulk of the Allied army, even when the combat factors available are relatively even and weather prohibits air missions. While casualties will be heavy on both sides, the Allies are better able to make good their losses. And, the

weather can change, leaving German units in relatively exposed positions. Waiting in a solid defensive position for the Allied infantry, armor and airpower may be the lesser of two evils for the German player, no matter how uninspiring a choice. The rich may get even richer if the Allies can capture the V1 sites, which will either increase their replacement rate or free up airpower for other uses. Even though attacking the fortress cities on the coast in the Pas de Calais may be a daunting prospect for the Allied player, the capture and elimination of the V1 sites is probably worth the effort if the troops are available.

The absence of automatic victories on the CRT is also important for the tactical dispositions of both sides. If the German army is withdrawing after a defeat in France, the Allied ability to follow and annihilate the retreating forces can be hindered by the Germans leaving behind a few units with interlocking ZOCs. German headquarters units may be ideal for this purpose if they have not previously taken a casualty or have not yet been inverted to their reverse side. In other cases, more valuable rearguard units may have to be sacrificed to prevent even heavier casualties. Smaller SS units may be ideal in this regard since they can be automatically resurrected with the Panzer Reserve. In the battle for Germany itself, similar delaying forces can be used to prevent first impulse assaults with tactical air support on important German positions for at least a turn. The headquarters units that have survived can again perform this role, although Volksturm units are equally appropriate in this regard, if not more so. If the Allies are far enough away from key objective cities, such delaying units might even prevent the Allies from having any chance of victory.

The Allies might find this tactic to be worthwhile in defending an early beachhead. Some units may be sacrificed at the limits of the beachhead to permit time for a buildup. Such unit sacrifices might be particularly necessary if there are losses in the initial invasion and bad weather then appears. Forward Allied units are lost, but the beachhead is not in danger. If a commando raid succeeds in capturing a port, one of the units might be advanced on the second impulse to prevent a German attack to recapture the port, although the commando's lack of a ZOC makes such delaying actions more difficult. It will all depend upon how far away the nearest German units are. If none can reach on the first impulse, the placement of rangers and commandos could effectively prevent any possibility of German recapture (barring an airborne landing).

TERRAIN EFFECTS ON COMBAT

Armor Limitations. Terrain has an obvious effect on combat in the game. Armored units are particularly disadvantaged. They suffer disabilities defending in cities and rough terrain, although the presence of a river, mountain terrain, or fortress (for German panzers) may ease this problem. They are also at a disadvantage attacking cities and rough terrain. Thus, the rules tend to limit the most effective use of armor to the open terrain where it was, in fact, most efficiently deployed during the war. These situations normally aid the German player since he is usually on the defensive, but it will also place a limit on the effectiveness of the Panzer Reserve when it comes into play. An offensive into the Ardennes is limited in its potential impact without infantry support. One advantage that

Normandy has as an invasion site is the presence of rough terrain hexes in the area. Once they are reached (if they are reached), the Allied beachhead is more secure since the major German units likely to be available for counterattacks in the first weeks will be armored units. If German infantry support is limited, the Allies will be hard to dislodge.

Mountains and Rivers. Strong defensive positions due to terrain generally aid the German player since he will be on the defensive; but the same considerations hold for the Allied player in a quiet sector or when he has to be concerned about a German counterattack. Mountains and rivers provide the fairly standard defense lines in *FORTRESS EUROPA* as in most games. While defenders are doubled behind river lines, the rivers on the board do not provide many solid defensive positions for the Germans. The Loire protects southwestern France from an attack from the north, but it is difficult to envision the Germans having enough units to defend this line or the Allies concentrating major attacks against the bulk of the German army if they are here. It might prove to be an effective line of defense for a time against Allied forces moving north from an initial invasion in the Bay of Biscay area. In the north, the lower Seine-Marne provides a useable defensive position. Since Paris is a trap for the Germans (see the airpower section below), the Marne has to be used instead of the upper Seine north of R10. The Rhein in southern Germany and the Maas in the north can combine with the fortresses between them to supply a solid defense of the Fatherland later in the game.

Mountain hexes also double the defenders, but the stacking limit of one unit per hex restricts their utility as a defensive position to some extent. For example, if the Germans defend in the mountains stretching from R22 to Z18, the defense can be cracked even though the defenders will be doubled. If six Allied 6-4s stack in U18 and T18 on second impulse, five could attack a German 5-3 in U19 at 3-1 odds while one of the units soaks-off against the defender in V18 (see Figure 1). The Allied units would probably be assured of holding their positions in these two hexes, although some of the attacking units could be at half-strength after combat. Since any German counterattack would be at poor odds, both U19 and V18 would have to be abandoned during the German phase of the turn. Even a 2-1 attack against the mountain hexes, not difficult to achieve, would have a good chance of forcing the position. The availability of Allied tactical air support would raise the odds even further. A better defensive line would be behind the mountains. German units will no longer be doubled (except for the infantry in Dijon), but Allied stacking would limit the attack odds. Allied TAC ground support would have to be used to get even reasonable odds and would therefore be less effective. Of course, if the German player has only a few units available (the normal situation) the mountains should be occupied and the clear terrain behind them can serve as the next line of defense, particularly if additional units can be moved up. Even if the Allies do win an attack and hold their positions in the mountains against this line of defense, and the German units are forced to retreat, the only Allied units immediately able to advance would be those still remaining in the mountains at the end of the Allied combat phase. The number of units involved should be somewhat limited since some ARs or AIs are likely to have resulted during the combat. Any

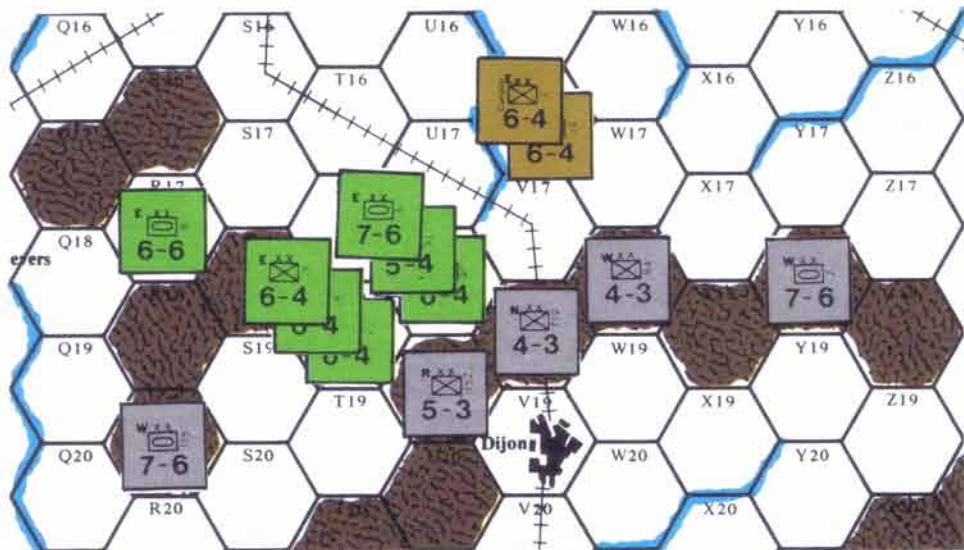


Figure 1: Breaking a Mountain Defense. Second Impulse Attacks: 2 Inf, 35 Inf, 90 Inf and 5 Armor vs. 353 Inf at 3-1; 94 Inf vs. 719 Inf at 1-2.

exchanges would have further weakened the Allied units that remained in the mountains. The Germans would then have time to create a new defensive position behind the Saone, or even in the mountains further south.

Rough Terrain. Rough terrain limits the combat factors of armor and also limits armored movement. The limitations on movement may actually hurt the German player more. The Allied infantry generally have superior second impulse movement when compared to German infantry. Armor on both sides is roughly equal. As a consequence, rough terrain—since it limits movement by panzers and panzer-grenadiers—will make exploitation of first impulse victories more difficult for the Germans than it will for the Allies. Rough terrain, however, has major impact even when no armor is involved in the combat. The defender may be able to maintain a defensive line since retreats are optional. Of course, the attacker, if adjacent at the end of the turn, leaves the defender with the choice of counterattacking or retreating to avoid low odds attacks. Infantry battles in the rough terrain of southern Belgium, Luxembourg and eastern France should go in the favor of the Allies given their tactical air superiority, stronger infantry divisions, and greater numbers. The German army could be bled to death if it attempts to fight major battle in this area. The Siegfried Line will normally be a much better alternative as a defensive position. Of course, a slow withdrawal through this area is another possibility. The Germans can retreat one hex per turn, forcing continuous Allied attacks if the delay to the Allied advance will serve some broader strategic purpose.

While the rough terrain in Normandy may make it easier for the Allies to secure a beachhead, it can also create problems. If the rough terrain hexes are the invasion sites, the invading units will be eliminated on any D1, E2 or E result against a two-step enemy unit or any DR result against any unit. If the clear terrain hexes (such as L3, L4 or M5) are invaded, units in the rough terrain could keep the Allies pinned on the beaches where AR results are disasters. The Germans could even back off on the first impulse and take a combination of even attacks and soak-offs on the second, forcing the Allied player to take some dangerous counterattacks on his first and second impulses ("dangerous" referring to anything with the possibility of an AR). While airpower and Allied numbers should eventually triumph, the process will take time, permitting the German player to establish a second line of defense. Once the rough terrain is reached by Allied units in this area, the German player will face a choice of retreating or counterattacking. Even when

the Allies do get off the beaches and reach this terrain, it can still hinder the Allies. Defenders in hexes M8, L7, J6 and I6 can stack three high while the Allied units at M7, L6, K6 and J5 will only be two per hex. The higher average value of the Allied units becomes less of an advantage in these circumstances, and the powerful Allied armored formations will be effectively kept out of action for a number of turns. While the beachhead is quite safe, the breakout to the interior of France may be seriously delayed.

Southern Germany east of the Siegfried Line provides another example of how German defenders can use the terrain limitations on stacking to their advantage. If the Rhein is broken and crossed at Freiburg (EE21) and the Allies are safely established on the east bank, the German player can retreat his forces to a line from GG19 south, forcing the Allies to attack from rough terrain and mountains with a limited number of units (see Figure 2). A second line of defense could eventually be formed at GG19 or HH18-HH19-HH20-HH21-GG22-GG23. If the line is anchored at HH18, the defenders could have as many as 16 units in place, excluding units that stack free, while the Allies could have a maximum of eight (again, see Figure 2). Some of the defenders could even be armored units, since they would be defending in clear terrain. Since this situation would occur during the last part of the game, the Allied airpower would be less prevalent due to higher probabilities of bad weather and the somewhat greater availability of German tactical airpower. It could take many weeks for a breakthrough to occur, if at all, in this sector. If Allied attacks go badly, there may even be exposed half-strength Allied units that can be attacked at favorable odds in the German phase.

Cities. Cities double infantry units for defensive purposes and leave armor at its basic strength (barring other terrain effects), and enemy armor is handicapped when attacking them. While cities are good individual defensive hexes in most cases, they must be combined with other types of defensive positions for any type of coherent defensive line to be formed. The cities themselves are too scattered to provide such a line of their own. They do have the additional advantage of ensuring supply for occupying units (except for Allied units in German cities) without the necessity of a headquarters unit being nearby.

Fortresses. These forts are a terrain modifier that aid only the German player. They not only strengthen the defensive combat factors available and make retreats optional, but since counterattacks against adjacent units are not required, these positions cannot be forced as mountain, river or rough terrain can be by soak-offs and other attacks on the second

impulse that result in Allied units ending their turn in neighboring hexes. It is essential for the German player to keep at least two steps in each fortress that he wants to hold if it could be attacked on the first impulse of the Allied turn. Two steps in the fortress will prevent it from being vacant during the second impulse due to an E, E2 or D1 result. If the fortress is vacant, the Allied player could move units in and destroy the fortress, even if the hex is not held. At least two steps in key coastal fortresses such as Cherbourg, Brest, Boulogne or Calais are necessary in the initial setup to make their capture by invasion much more difficult. The Siegfried Line of fortresses is the last line of defense for the Germans in the end game, and it needs to be preserved as long as possible. The double line of fortresses around Saarbrücken will make Allied attacks extremely costly, since even if units in one fort are eliminated, another is available and Allied units will be forced to attack at poor odds on the second impulse if they move in to destroy the cleared first fortress. If they do not move in, the German player can simply reoccupy the site. Similarly, around Aachen the partial second line makes Allied attacks more costly, particularly with the stacking limits imposed by the rough terrain. This line of fortifications provides the best hope for an effective final German defensive position on the Franco-German border. The fortifications will have a tendency to force the Allied drive against Germany toward the North German Plain, but it permits this area to be more lightly defended while the battle rages around Essen or Bremen. The fortresses can also serve as excellent sites for the refitting of units that have lost steps. The German player should be able to shuttle units with step losses into the fortresses to recover while using the full-strength units elsewhere.

Given the importance of fortresses in most locations to the German defense, it can often be to the Allied player's advantage to occupy, however temporarily, a fortress hex—thus destroying it. Even if such a move means attacking other units in adjacent fortresses at 1-4 or 1-5 odds, the destruction of the fortress will open up possibilities for attacks on later turns. If ample replacements are available, the low odds attacks will be worthwhile. With luck, the unit might even get an AR result. Breaking through the Siegfried Line or opening up the Channel Ports in the Pas de Calais has to begin somewhere. In other circumstances, an American armored cavalry unit could even be sacrificed as a consequence of being out of supply at the end of a turn if it could destroy fortresses while it was moving. Given that normally it is extremely useful for the Allied player to destroy fortresses when the opportunity presents itself, it is equally essential for the German player to preserve them. In fact, as noted in a later section, one useful place for German training divisions to await their activation to full battle-status is in the fortresses of the Siegfried Line or the Pas de Calais.

SUPPLY

The supply situation can become an important factor at different points in the game. Brittany and Normandy are important invasion sites in part because there are major ports available at Cherbourg and Brest. These ports, once captured, can be used to supply a large number of Allied units. One of the disadvantages of an invasion around Dieppe, Ostend or in the Netherlands is that the Allied player will spend a number of turns when he will only have 12 or 13 units available for combat due to supply restrictions. South France is frequently a good site for a second invasion if Marseilles can be captured quickly because of the availability of this major supply source.

Although supply is critical for the Allies in the first turns of the game, the Germans also need to be careful in some areas. Units in the rough terrain

of the Cotentin Peninsula (Normandy) could easily find themselves out of supply. Creating a line of supply for units defending the beaches can be extremely tricky if Allied units reach the rough terrain since they will be difficult to dislodge. The Allied units cannot be forced to retreat, so German units at J3, J4, K3 or K4 may be effectively out of supply, unable to move due to overlapping ZOCs, and will lack the means to rectify the situation (see Figure 3). They will probably be eliminated by the end of the German turn, either due to combat results or lack of supply. Since a 3-1 attack is necessary to achieve a DE result against the Allied units present, it is unlikely that a supply route can be opened. The best the German player can hope to do is to cause some casualties among the Allies before his units are eliminated. One possible way to guard against this possibility and to still defend these beach hexes would be to leave Cherbourg understacked, with only two units in the city on the initial setup. This positioning would permit one infantry unit on beach defense to retire to the safety of the fortress in June I. Cherbourg is likely enough to be safe from an invasion assault since the Allied player will have to fear, and probably assume, the presence of an additional hidden setup unit in the city.

The Allied player in the middle and end games will often have a sufficient number of ports in France that have been previously captured to pro-



Figure 2: Defensive Positions in Southern Germany. Red indicates German stacking; blue, Allied.



vide all necessary supply capacity. The key to getting supplies to the frontline units then becomes the headquarters units. They must be positioned so that they can keep the combat units in supply. But, the Allied HQs also need to be protected. A successful German paratroop drop could eliminate the only HQ in the area, leaving Allied units with no alternative but to abandon forward positions and regroup in available cities. Any possibility of offensive action for a number of turns could be lost, and some units may even suffer step losses. Thus, Allied headquarters should never be left alone within TAC range of German air and airmobile possibilities. In the middle game, there is one way that the German can threaten to create supply problems for the Allies. If the coastal fortresses in the Pas de Calais have not been reduced and contain strong garrisons, a German HQ in Calais or Boulogne could pose the threat of a paratroop drop anywhere in TAC range. A Mulberry could be destroyed by such a drop or a major port lost for at least a few turns. An isolated Allied HQ moving to the front would also be in danger. In the end game, Allied HQs become even more critical for supply to combat units inside Germany since the option of moving to a city as a refuge will not be available for the Allied forces.

Another potential problem for the Allied player occurs when units move into the rear areas. These units will be restricted in that they must either remain within supply distance of a headquarters or move from city to city. It may be very time-consuming, as a consequence, to send reinforcements from the area around Paris or the Siegfried Line to south France, and vice versa. When movement is restricted due to bad weather, the problem becomes even more acute. Similarly, small German forces left in cities could complicate Allied shifts from one front to another. Such units will be difficult to attack safely if a headquarters is not within supply range. The German units left behind will eventually be lost, but they will have served a purpose. Such small garrisons could also make it more difficult for the Allies to create lines of controlled hexes so that the HQ unit in the South France invasion force cannot draw on the supply capacity of Bordeaux or Brest. Further, Allied movements into areas largely abandoned by retreating German forces (the Bay of Biscay comes to mind) will be slowed by the need to have a HQ unit along. The speed of the advance could be determined by the movement allowance of the headquarters rather than the movement allowance of the fast armored spearheads.

The German player also has to make sure that his units are within range of HQs, particularly in the early months of the game. If an Allied breakout also succeeds in overrunning the only HQ in an area, the surviving German formations will be forced to withdraw, perhaps to positions where they can be eliminated more easily. The loss of a headquarters in the rear to an Allied airborne attack (perhaps with TAC ground support) could lead to a premature forced withdrawal from a whole sector of the front. Only the possibility of railings in a replacement HQ eases this threat somewhat. With the first edition of the rules, if the only German HQ left in the south of France was eliminated, the Allies could conquer the area by default since German defenders could only remain in supply in the cities—and the cities do not provide an appropriate line of defense in this area by themselves. The loss of the sole HQ in an area could still present problems if bridge attacks were planned to prevent the arrival of German reinforcements or if no HQ is available to move to that sector. (For this reason, the Army Group G HQ in Toulouse should probably spend the first months of the game moving at its best speed towards the south of France.) The German supply situation is still less complicated than that of the Allies since units distant from the front do move freely without any supply concerns.



Figure 3: Potential German Supply Problems in Normandy.

The fact that units in Germany proper are automatically in supply removes most problems in the end game for the German player, but it is essential for him to be careful to save a headquarters or two for this period. Even if late in 1944 and in 1945 all German units are on German soil, a HQ may be necessary. If a series of Allied attacks fail with heavy casualties, there would be opportunities for a German counteroffensive to recover terrain or inflict additional losses. It would be extremely frustrating to not be able to launch attacks into Belgian, Dutch or French territory simply because no HQ was available to guarantee supply for the counteroffensive. Note that there is a headquarters that appears with the Panzer Reserve; it can provide the necessary supply for the units in any counteroffensive that could possibly be launched. Similarly, the area around Arnhem and the dyke are essential for the defense of northern Germany. These defensive positions might have to be abandoned if no HQ is available in the area or if the only available one is lost in combat.

SPECIALIZED UNITS

The infantry and armored units are the core of the armies on both sides, but there are a fair number of other units that have some unique characteristics, particularly in the German OB. The careful use of these units can influence the outcome of the game.

Coastal Defense Units. The front and reverse sides of the German coastal defense divisions are one of the more innovative additions that *FORTRESS EUROPA* has introduced. The extra strength in fixed positions well reflects the German use of understrength units in coastal positional defenses. Once they move, however, the advantage is lost. The careful placement of these units in the initial setup can make a difference. Not all 5-0 and 6-0 units are created equal. The three Luftwaffe 5-0 units when inverted become 3-3 infantry units, while the six Wehrmacht 5-0 units only become 2-3 infantry units. Of the thirteen 6-0 units available, only four become 3-3 units upon inversion (the 265th, 326th, 346th and 347th) while the others become 2-3 divisions. These differences should be taken into account when the units are initially placed. In the 7th Army Military District, for example, the two 8-0 coast defense units normally will go to Brest and Cherbourg to force greater Allied efforts to capture these important supply sources. Although they invert to 3-3 infantry units, they are unlikely to ever move. The 265th, since it inverts to a 3-3, should be placed in areas where eventual movement is likely to be necessary. St. Malo or the rough terrain south of Cherbourg are such locations. The other 6-0 units

can be placed as more or less permanent garrisons for St. Nazaire or Lorient. In the case of the 15th Army Military District, the 5-0 and 6-0 units that invert to 2-3s garrison Le Havre and the Boulougne-Calais-Dunkerque fortresses. Units in these locations are likely to remain in place until eliminated, so their enhanced coast defense value is retained until the end. Le Havre, in particular, is likely to have such a permanent garrison. The LW 17th and 18th, along with the 326th and 346th, can be placed in Dieppe, Ostend, P5, U6 or other locations where a beach defense is necessary. Units in these locations, however, are likely to move at some point in the game. Thus, the coast defense units with the greater *mobile* combat factors should be placed in such positions rather than in Le Havre. The extra combat factor that will be available could be critical in later battles. Little things can mean a lot.

Training Divisions. The German training divisions need to be protected until they are converted to regular combat units. The 158th and 159th units should be extracted from the Biscay area if possible since they do not change until August III and September I respectively. As they are likely to be frozen, their initial placement should probably be on rail lines, permitting an immediate escape when the opportunity presents itself. The 165th and 182nd in the Pas de Calais are safer from any danger of early elimination. They can be stacked in a coastal fortress with a coastal defense unit to provide the two steps for a more effective defensive position. The 165th converts five turns earlier, so it can be placed closer to Normandy where the first invasion is likely. The 148th will normally be safe enough in the south of France. The 157th is probably the key training division since it becomes a mountain division upon inversion. It can either move toward southern France or to the mountainous areas north of Switzerland to await the completion of training. In general, when it is possible, the training divisions should be withdrawn out of harm's way to rear areas. If an extra rail movement is available, they might even be sent to garrison fortresses in Germany while awaiting their conversion to full battle units.

When these units do convert, they are relatively fragile in combat since, like inverted coastal defense units, they have only one step. They thus lack the staying power of regular infantry formations. When stacked with other units, they should ideally be stacked with regular infantry or other two-step units so that a whole formation may not be lost on an exchange or any result requiring a single step loss. The former training divisions, like coast defense units, are easier to replace than regular infantry divisions. It takes only two replacement factors to recreate the unit. While most of these will never be recreated once lost (there will inevitably be more pressing German uses for the inevitable replacements), the 157th Mountain Division is a different case. As a four-factor unit with great mobility and terrain advantages, it can be ventured in combat and replaced *relatively* cheaply.

Mountain Units. There are only five mountain units that appear in the game. These units are invaluable in mountainous regions because of their movement capabilities. They can pressure defensive positions, outflank others, or cut off lines of retreat. Two of these units are German, but the second one enters very late in the game. The 157th, on the other hand, appears earlier when it converts from a training unit. Its movement capabilities in the mountains is one reason that this training unit, above all others, must be preserved. Since it is not a frozen unit, there is no excuse for it being lost prematurely. Even if it is not used offensively, it can be used to counter moves by the Allied mountain units. There are three Allied mountain units in the game, and they all share a major limitation in that none of them can take replacements. In effect, they are even more fragile ultimately than the Ger-

man 157th. The British 52nd Division has the unique distinction and disadvantage of being both a glider and a mountain unit. As a glider unit, it cannot take replacements. Since there are normally other Allied paratrooper units available, the 52nd is probably more valuable being used as mountain troops than as airborne ones. The other two mountain units are French. They also cannot take replacements, and their nationality further restricts their use since they cannot attack with units of other nationalities (a good simulation of historical fact). Their movement capabilities still make them quite useful in various areas of the board, but the replacement and nationality considerations do place limitations upon their role.

Headquarters Units. The major role of the Allied headquarters has, in effect, been covered in our discussion of supply. They are not combat units, and they must be protected at all times. The fact that their preservation is among the "Sudden Death" victory conditions for the Allied player is another reason why their safety should be a priority objective. Since their loss should be avoided for tactical reasons, the choice of these Sudden Death victory conditions is a good idea for the Allied player if this version of the game is being played.

German HQ units can be used in a combat role. There is no pressing need to preserve all of them, although as noted above, it is necessary to retain some of them on the board. Even though their preservation is a German Sudden Death victory condition for January I, this option is not a good choice for the German player. German HQs are basically two-step units. When first lost, they are almost immediately and costlessly replaced. Since the original side of the German HQ can usually be considered an expendable step loss, they can be used to cover a German retreat or to take a loss on a D1, A1, E or E2 result without weakening the available German strength in any significant fashion. The German player does need to pay some attention to the turn in which the change to the inverted side occurs, for some of the German HQs convert even if such a loss has not occurred. Rommel (HQ B) automatically inverts in September I if it has not already done so; as a consequence, it can be taken as a step loss early in the game. The 88 HQ in the Netherlands Army Military District inverts in September II, so it is often useful to move this unit from its original district to the scene of the fighting as soon as possible. Since it is a frozen unit, it might be advisable to rail the OB West HQ from Paris as soon as possible to the area and then begin marching the 88 HQ to the front. (Admittedly, it might prove difficult to move this unit to the front soon enough given the distance to be covered, but such an effort might still be worthwhile.) If the German units become unfrozen, it might also be equally useful to rail this unit to a position where it can cover a German retreat to new defensive positions. The PGW unit is the other HQ that will automatically convert; although the inversion is not due until November I, the replacement counter is much faster and more useful. The PGW HQ can also make a good delaying unit to cover the withdrawal of other German forces. In fact, with its limited movement factor, it may have no other choice.

Headquarters Troops. The various German headquarters troops that are available, like the training divisions, need to be preserved from harm since they are invaluable in providing an easy way to replace an eliminated unit. One replacement plus one of these units can regenerate a six- to nine-factor division. The most logical destroyed units to replace in this way are the armored divisions, at least early in the game. On occasion, the 6-4 airborne units may be a better choice if terrain considerations at the front indicate the need for infantry rather than panzer formations. Also, there is little need to recreate an armored division that is about to be withdrawn to the Panzer Reserve. If the units that start in the 15th Army Military District are being

threatened by an invasion in the Pas de Calais or by Allied advances, they should either be used to recreate a destroyed unit on the spot or evacuated to safety.

Commandos/Rangers. The commandos and rangers are unique units that can greatly help the Allies. Their advantages include their ability to make raids, the fact that they stack free, and their status of being automatically in supply. On invasion turns, they can provide a few extra combat factors and fill out the quotas on infantry combat factors for various invasion areas. They also do not consume any of the limited initial supply capacity that the Allied player has. Their ability to stack free is important during invasions given the limitations on unit stacking during the first impulse of the landings. Their ability to raid and capture ports is most important as a threat. They are unlikely to be able to capture a fortified port on their own, but the possibility that a raid will occur forces the German player to leave garrisons in at least some of the ports, particularly if they are within range of tactical air support. The impact of potential raids against most ports will be limited even when they are successful. If the commandos do occupy a port, even an unguarded one, the offensive threat generated will usually be limited. A port with a supply capacity of one or two, assuming German demolitions are *not* successful, provides little opportunity for an offensive from that source until a line of friendly hexes exists to other Allied supply sources (at which time there will be little need for such an offensive). If Nice or Genova is captured, for example, the major impact will be to disrupt German lines of communications. A solitary infantry division or two could be stationed in these cities. These units could not move out of the city to accomplish offensive operations, however, since they would be out of supply at the end of the turn. Such a raid might still accomplish a positive benefit by isolating a sector of the front from reinforcements. If this is the goal, even if the infantry unit in the ports is eliminated, its loss will not have been in vain.

The automatic supply status of rangers and commandos has utility beyond the fact that they do not count against Allied supply capacity. They can move into areas distant from HQs to push back German railheads or create lines of friendly hexes that HQs can use to draw upon the supply capacity of distant ports that have been captured. For example, if the second invasion has occurred in southern France but Marseilles has not yet been captured, a commando moving in the direction of Bordeaux could permit additional units to be landed for a south France offensive by permitting an Allied headquarters in the area to draw upon the supply capacity available in northern or western France. Two or three commando units might also be effective in limiting German movement in the interior of France. Their ability to limit movement is constrained by the fact that they lack ZOCs, so one unit is unlikely to be able to inhibit German movement very greatly.

The ability to stack freely can be a potential advantage to the Allied player even beyond the invasion turn. An extra one or two combat factors actually could make the difference in many circumstances. Four extra combat factors from two British commandos might make the difference in the fighting in the rough terrain around Normandy, for instance. Similarly, the few extra combat factors in the area of the Ardennes or southern Germany could be important. If the Allies successfully cross the Rhein in the area of Freiburg, the availability of the commandos could make a dramatic difference in the amount of time it takes to punch through the successive defense lines shown in Figure 2. Since this situation is likely to occur late in the game, after most of the ports have already been captured and when raids are hardly a concern, the Allied player might want to plan ahead so as to have some of these units moving towards areas where terrain will limit

stacking. The possibilities for the tactical use of commandos and rangers indicate that they should not be thrown away on raids simply to make the raid. The "use them or lose them" syndrome is not appropriate; a long-shot raid could waste an asset that will have a valuable role later in the game. Raiding is not the only value that commandos have for the Allies. Little things can mean a lot.

The basic weakness of commando and ranger units, other than their limited combat factors, is the fact that they do not exert a zone of control (other than in the hex they occupy). They can be easily surrounded and eliminated. If they occupy defensive terrain by themselves, German units can simply move adjacent to the mountain, river line, or city and force the commandos to either attack or retreat next turn. If the commandos should successfully capture a port during a raid, and even if no German units can reach the port on first impulse movement, the port is still in jeopardy. The German units move adjacent to the port on the second impulse, and if they are strong enough they attack. They could also move adjacent without attacking; the commandos and any Allied reinforcements that land would then be forced to attack out of the port on the Allied first turn impulse, hoping that an AR result does not come up on the CRT. If a storm should appear, no reinforcements arrive and the commandos are doomed. If overcast weather occurs, the reinforcements may arrive, but the lack of airpower could still make the necessary attack very risky. With overcast weather, however, the commandos could at least be withdrawn by sea movement.

Allied Minor and French Formations. The units of the smaller Allies all have the disadvantage of being unable to take replacements. Unlike the British and American formations, their losses are permanent. While the German player may often forego favorable odds attacks against British or American units when accumulated replacements are high, attacks against units that cannot be refitted may be more inviting. By the same token, when these units are on the front lines, the Allied player would be well advised to stack them with British/American units. The French units are even more limited than the other nationalities since they cannot attack jointly with either the British or American troops. Thus, if they are involved in an attack and casualties result, they must take the irreplaceable step losses. Since the French units are also generally weaker than their British or American counterparts, their opportunities for offensive action are somewhat limited. Given the fragility of these Allied units, they often will end up guarding German units trapped in fortresses in France as Allied offensive operations pass them by.

Airborne Units. Allied paratroop drops are an important offensive weapon. On the invasion turn, they can help isolate the beachhead from reinforcements for a turn or perhaps more. They might even provide the few extra combat factors necessary to raise the odds by one column on the CRT on the second impulse. Paratroop drops can also serve tactical purposes later in the game. Three units dropped in adjacent hexes could cut off the retreat of some German units assaulted from the front, eliminating the units if the combat results called for retreats by the defenders. Paratroopers could also effectively undouble a river defense line for attacks if they survive the drop. A paratroop drop, for example, would be one means of cracking the German defense lines in southern Germany if the Rhein is crossed. Allied airborne units in combination with commandos might also be able to effectively combine to capture a new port. Lorient and St. Nazaire, for example, would be within TAC range of a Normandy beachhead. Paratrooper drops can also be used for strategic purposes. An airborne landing might be able to capture the fifteenth German city. Since counterattacks do not occur if the Allies are in control of this num-

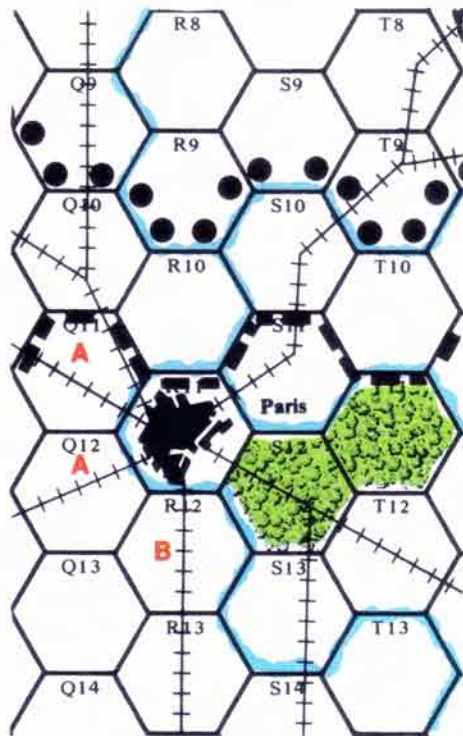


Figure 4: The Paris Trap. Hexes "A" are those from which Paris is attacked; "B" is hex for soakoff against S2 and S13.

ber of cities, such a tactic could be quite effective. Paratroops could also be used to meet some of the Sudden Death victory conditions when land offensives are obviously going to be unable to do so.

As valuable as Allied airborne units are, they do have limitations. The biggest one is that there are only five drops allowed in the game. One will probably be used during the first invasion, and at least one should be saved for a possible drop in the last turns of the game and as a persistent threat in the immediately preceding turns to force the Germans to defend against this possibility. This threat is particularly effective since the German player does not know the upcoming weather conditions while he is moving. The remaining three airdrops obviously must be used judiciously and in key situations. The other limitation on the use of the Allied paratroopers is that the number of drops comes into play for the Sudden Death victory conditions. It is possible to limit their use to two drops by September 1. Having two unused drops by January 1 should also be possible, but perhaps more difficult.

The German airborne units are most valuable in their infantry function. They are stronger than the equivalent Wehrmacht formations, and they are also more mobile on both first and second impulse. And they can provide the possibility of airdrops in addition, even though the German player has only two such chances in the game (one unit each time). Analogous to the use of Allied paratroops, one drop should be kept available as a late threat to force the Allied player to defend against its possible use to snatch victory away. The other drop can be used in a key situation—taking out an undefended Allied headquarters, eliminating an undefended mulberry when the Allies have a limited supply capacity, or as part of a tactical counteroffensive (perhaps in conjunction with the appearance of the Panzer Reserve). In order to make the threat of German paratroop drops a credible one, positioning the German HQs must take into account the distance to key objectives where airborne landings could occur. As noted earlier, leaving a headquarters as part of a strong garrison in the Pas de Calais is one means of extending the TAC range for possible drops. A German paratrooper drop on the invasion turn is normally inadvisable since the only airborne unit in a German city is set up at half-strength. With only

one step, the chances of it surviving any drop are lowered considerably. If the Allied mulberry is left unoccupied at the end of the second impulse, however, the dropping of this unit is probably worth the risk; a successful drop would eliminate the Allies' major supply source, even if the airborne unit were eliminated in subsequent combat. In later turns, the need to maintain the threat of a drop will require that an airborne unit usually be kept in a German city for potential use. Aachen is often a good choice since the unit also safeguards the adjacent fortresses and is available for action in Belgium or the Netherlands should the need arise. The threat of German paratroops is lessened somewhat by the fact that the Allied player knows the weather conditions as he moves; thus he can leave a HQ unit unprotected when weather conditions prohibit air activity.

Both sides have airlift capacities, with the Allied use being much greater. The limit on Allied use is that only one unit can be airlifted per turn, and that unit must be either an airborne or glider unit. The Allied player, as a consequence, can shuttle such units to England or Africa where they can threaten new airdrops. Airborne units can also reinforce a city distant from the coast rather quickly, weather permitting. Airlift is an efficient manner of moving the British 52nd Glider/Mountain Division to a desired sector. The German player can airlift two airborne units in the game, one per turn. This capability will at least permit the Germans to reinforce a threatened city or fortress in distant areas. Allied attempts to reduce a fortress quickly can be confounded if a 6-4 airborne unit flies in as a reinforcement. Like the two German paratroops, however, the limited airlift capacity has to be used judiciously.

AIRPOWER

The use of Allied airpower for ground support, limiting rail movement, and attacking German replacements is usually clear and dictated by circumstances at the time. Attacking German replacements is almost always worthwhile as one use for SAC units. (Attacks on German replacements are particularly useful with the PBM rules since uncancelled German CAP can lead to additional armor replacements for the German player.) Attacking the V-1 sites and U-boat bases is also generally appropriate since it will protect Allied replacements. Carpet bombing is an effective method of unhinging a German defensive line since it can be used to force a German retreat if the odds are right. A 2-1 attack with a +2 DRM means that the worst result that the Allies can suffer is an E2. Obviously, carpet bombing is best used in situations in which retreats are mandatory rather than optional. Carpet bombing is not particularly useful against fortresses or rough terrain hexes that contain more than one step (and if only one step is defending against the Allies, odds of better than 2-1 are very likely). Strafing and blowing the bridges on sections of rivers can be a useful tactic, but the use of these air missions is somewhat more complicated and merits additional discussion.

Strafing, as mentioned above, is one method that can be used to delay any German counterattacks that might be mounted. The thought of losses before any battle is joined can be a daunting one for any side that has difficulty replacing losses that are suffered. Perhaps even more important, key units may not even reach the battlefield to participate. Strafing will not have much impact on German infantry not moving by rail since most of these units cannot move fast enough overland to place themselves in jeopardy, but it will limit the powerful German armored formations. The German player is often a few factors short of achieving higher odds attacks, and strafing is likely to increase this frustrating tendency of too little, too late. The consequence of strafing the enemy will frequently be either lower

odds first impulse attacks with a reduced chance of success or second impulse attacks by the German where any victory cannot be exploited.

Strafing can be a particularly effective tactic in the PBM game if the PBM rules are being used (and they are highly recommended—see Don Eisan's "Flying CAP" in *The GENERAL*, Vol. 17, No. 4). In this system, the German may not allocate CAP to prevent strafing since any TAC units used to counter this possible Allied air allocation are simply lost if the Allies choose not to strafe. Flying CAP against strafing can prevent it, but will cost the German player a portion of a limited, valuable resource. The Allies, however, will retain full use of their tactical airpower for other missions (such as ground support). In the FTF game, if the Allies do not allocate units for the strafing mission, the German player does not have to worry about countering the mission. This situation is one reason why the German TAC air allocations are higher when the PBM system is being used. It can be a wise Allied practice to indicate a willingness to allocate air units to the strafing mission early in the game simply to force the German player to allocate air units to prevent movement problems for his units. The threat of strafing attacks can be potent even when it is not used. Of course, on some turns the German CAP against this mission may not be necessary, since it will be unlikely that any major shifts of units will occur.

Using Allied airpower to destroy bridges for a turn can serve a variety of functions, although on occasion it can be a two-edged sword. One not uncommon use of this tactic is to attack bridges on a section of river in order to isolate a portion of the battlefield from potential German reinforcements. Disruption of such movement can prevent the German player from shoring up a weak defensive position or concentrating sufficient forces for a counterattack. Attacking the bridges will limit German communications by rail, and particularly hamper the German armor which has the speed to reach threatened sectors of the front lines. It is a less effective technique against enemy infantry since these units can at least cross a river where the bridges have been blown without danger. The German infantry, however, will often still be too slow to reach the battlefield in sufficient numbers, and they are usually too weak by themselves to turn the tide against the Allies.

If the Orne east of Caen is subject to bridge attacks, a Normandy beachhead can be made more secure on one flank for a turn. Destruction of the bridges on the lower Loire and the Vienne or the Gironde can greatly limit the availability of German troops in the vicinity of the ports on the Bay of Biscay. Allocating an air unit to blow the Seine bridges at Paris will prevent rail movement of German units towards the fighting in sectors in the west of France. Paris is a major rail junction, and it is also a bottleneck if the bridge on the Seine are attacked from R11 north. The isolation of areas of France can be complemented by the judicious placement of the partisan counter if it is available to further inhibit German troop movements. In the later turns of the game, either the Ruhr and the Weser or the Moselle and the Rhein can be subjected to bridge attacks to prevent the Germans from reinforcing critical sectors of the front under attack or from mustering sufficient masses for a possible counterattack. The placement of Allied headquarters is of some importance for bridge attacks. If possible, in terms of movement and safety, they should be advanced on second impulse to positions where whole segments of river lines are subject to attacks on bridges by tactical airpower. The available SAC units may be necessary to attack German replacements, Bomb the remaining U-boat bases, carpet bomb, or limit German rail movement. If these other missions require SAC air units, there may not be enough available to effectively isolate a sector of

the front from German reinforcements unless tactical airpower can be committed as well.

Attacking bridges can also be used as a defensive measure to protect Allied troops behind a river line from German attacks. Flanks can be weakly held, and the negation of ZOCs means that the Allied units will not have to attack (in fact, cannot attack) doubled defenders. On the German portion of the turn, these units will be safe from attack as well. While this kind of maneuver can be quite effective at times, it can also work to the disadvantage of the Allies. While the bridges are being attacked, the German player will be able to strengthen his defensive positions and will not have to be concerned about attacking the Allied units across the river. When the time comes for an Allied attack, it will be across a river with doubled defenders who will have been receiving reinforcements untroubled. The bridgeless river protects not only the Allies but the Germans as well. When bad weather occurs, as eventually it must, the Allies will be faced with a choice of abandoning the river line or attacking across it without benefit of air support. While a German counterattack might be weakened by slow movement in bad weather, the weak flank now becomes a distinct liability. Overall, while attacking the bridges at times will be an essential and useful defensive tactic, it should not be overused. It can buy time for a few turns while Allied reinforcements arrive, but it should not be relied upon too much. For example, the Orne bridges may be attacked in early turns to protect a Normandy beachhead, particularly while the number of Allied units ashore is limited by supply considerations, but sooner rather than later the Allies should fight for their positions, forcing either the attrition of German strength or the abandonment of the river line by the enemy. The Allied player should never create a bottleneck that is too easily corked.

Attacking bridges can also be an extremely useful offensive tactic at times. German units between two rivers can be placed in a precarious position. If the river in the rear has no bridges, retreat is impossible. Any E, E2, DR or D1 result will lead to the elimination if the attacks are taken in the right sequence. Ground support will increase the chances of such retreats, and carpet bombing can be particularly effective since such attacks increase the chances of retreats by the defender.

Some areas are clearly traps in this regard. Paris is one good example (see Figure 4), and its vulnerability may explain why the Germans abandoned that city in World War II rather than fight for it. To capture Paris from German units entrenched in the city, it is attacked from the west from hexes Q11, Q12 and perhaps units in R12. The bridges on the Marne River are attacked, preventing retreats to S11. A soak-off against S12 and S13 is mounted from R12, with this attack being taken after the assault on Paris so that there is no possibility of a

German retreat through S12. The attack against Paris should be at even odds (at least), and ground support by TAC air could raise the odds to a level where a German retreat is likely. If 2-1 odds can be achieved before the allocation of any air support, then carpet bombing will ensure that the Germans are forced to retreat by the combat odds of the CRT, guaranteeing their elimination. Even 1-1 odds with carpet bombing provides a five-sixths chance for the elimination of all German defending units.

The hexes between the Maas and the Rhein in the Netherlands (FF4, GG5, HH5 and II6) are a similar trap. This position is critically important since it protects the approaches to the North German Plain. Units behind the Maas, however, can be placed in a situation in which there is no retreat possible (see Figure 5). The Allied player can thus force the position quickly by the use of airpower in its various forms. The Allied player first attacks the bridges on the Rhein between Arnhem and Rotterdam. If he wishes to avoid higher losses through soak-offs, he can also attack the bridges on the upper Maas to avoid the necessity of attacking units in the II7 fortress and the bridges on the Maas-Rhein at Rotterdam to avoid that fortress and keep other attacking units out of ZOC on the second impulse. Hexes GG5 and HH5 are attacked in strength with ground support by TAC air units and/or carpet bombing against one of the hexes. Soak-offs will be taken against FF4 and II6. Another approach would be to attack the bridges at Rotterdam and those on the Rhein between Rotterdam and Arnhem, attack FF4 en masse from EE5 and FF5, and soak-off against GG5. On the second impulse, GG5 can be attacked from FF4, FF5 and GG6 without the defenders being doubled, and a soak-off can be taken against HH5. In either case, this apparently ideal defensive position will only slow the Allies for a turn or two and German casualties could be very heavy. There are really few options available for the German player in this area of the board. Using the Maas as a defensive line will mean willingly entering into a trap. The Rhein line behind it is even worse with flooded land to the north and the Iselmeer to the rear. It would be wise to avoid this position, but often the German player has few alternatives except to hope for bad weather. The defenders in this area should only include infantry units since the survivors of the above Allied attacks will at least be able to escape to friendly lines across the bridgeless rivers. Any armor that has been placed in this position could be lost in attempts to cross the Rhein.

FINAL COMMENTS

There are obviously many subtleties in *FORTRESS EUROPA*. The effective use of terrain is a major consideration that should influence German dispositions and Allied attacks. The use of airpower is critical. Bad weather inevitably aids the German player for it forces the Allies to march on Germany without a key weapon. The Allied player, in turn, must use this weapon as efficiently and effectively as possible when it is available. The employment of the various specialized units is also important. The management of these units requires greater attention on the part of the German player because he has such a diverse mix of units with differing strengths and weaknesses. In addition, as was obvious from many parts of the preceding discussion, the threats that various units can play is often as important as their actual use. The opposing player must plan for all the possibilities. If he does not, there will be openings for the other side to exploit. Attention to detail in this game—the little things—is essential for both players. Such attention will increase your chances of victory. Little things *do* mean a lot.



Figure 5: River Trap in the Netherlands. Hexes "A" are possible attack points; "B", possible soakoff hexes; and "T", target hexes for major attacks. Note the bridge attacks against the Rhein and Rhein-Maas.



OPONENTS WANTED

Ft SL-ASL and others. I live in the Dothan and Fort Rucker area. Matt Holt, Rt. 1, Box 162-A, Pansey, AL 36370, (205) 899-8615.

Hams—Want to try pbm by packet amateur radio? WAS, VITP many more. Honor system—new to gaming. Contact: Ab4AP, Bryan Turner, Route 4, Box 521, Athens, AL 35611.

ASL opponents wanted for ftf confrontation. Pierce Ostrander, 5046 E. Decatur St., Mesa, AZ 85205, (602) 985-4505.

Patient instructor waiting to teach you ASL! Experienced players also welcome. V. Pierce Ostrander, 5046 E. Decatur St., Mesa, AZ 85205, (602) 985-4505.

Adult gamer seeks skilled ftf opponents for weekend play of two player or multi-player 3R games. Peter Gartman, 3155 Deep Canyon Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210, (213) 278-3907.

A.R.E.A. rated opponents wanted for pbm WSIM. Current A.R.E.A. rating AAP. 1545 BCE. Mike Morris, 7328 Blue Springs Way, Citrus Heights, CA 95621, (916) 728-5917.

Top Gun, Fighter Combat School is now taking apps. Pbm AF tournament—now forming. If interested contact: Mike Morris, 7328 Blue Springs Way, Citrus Heights, CA 95621, (916) 728-5917.

Pbm/ftf ASL, AZ, FP, RF, SL series. Would love to GM DIP. Any takers on double blind/pbm ASL? Todd "IceMan" Bissell, 1675 Kasba St., Concord, CA 94518, 682-1556.

Need one opponent for BB'81 bpm only. Have open mind, your choice AH game. Anyone in South CA area. Fred Carter, 9762 Olympic Dr., Huntington Beach, CA 92646, (714) 963-1820.

Old Guard Wargamer will ftf FE, AK, TRC, TLD. No tyros or fantasy roller players please. Panzer Bob where are you? Randy Heller, 8404 Adams St., Lemon Grove, CA 92045, 460-7432.

Average gamer seeks ftf play in East Bay area. Also pbm TRC, WSIM, FE or HW. Will respond to all inquiries. Paul Kunkel, 930 Berrellesa, #D, Martinez, CA 94553, (415) 228-4713.

ASL and particularly DASL opponents wanted by adult gamer in Los Angeles area. Doug Cragoe, 6307 Cahuenga Blvd., N. Hollywood, CA 91606, (818) 763-2400.

15-year old novice. Looking for experienced DIP player. Need a challenge. Jared Jansma, Sacramento, CA 95814, 442-2967.

ASL! All relevant optional rules played. Responses may justify forming club, newsletter, and/or tournaments. Campaigner gamer—will help beginners. James C. Allen, 28352 Paseo Establo, San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675, (714) 496-5211.

Adult gamer seeks pbm WSIM. I have excellent pbm system. Also ftf or pbm FL, SUB, SST, TRC, AIW or others. Rated or non-rated. Charles Ryder, 1700 Civic Center Dr., #210, Santa Clara, CA 95050, (408) 249-7658.

Kampfgruppe Denver is now forming. Must be mature, reliable and generally available once/week for fun gaming. Play most wargames 3R, EIA, ASL, TRC monsters. Tom Slizewski, 8218 N. Washington, #3, Thornton, CO 80229, (303) 287-8862.

Eager new gamer seeks ftf ASL, TRC, PAA, VITP or a game of your choice. I'm tired of solitaire and would enjoy some relaxed gaming. Brian Mulvihill, 18 Sunset La., Apt. 27, Ridgefield, CT 06877, (203) 438-3624.

Any CON fans out there? Pbm DIP. Also want to hear from any DIP or multi-player game people. The truth is coming out. Russell. Ken Burke, 6 Meadowbrook Road, W. Hartford, CT 06107, 521-2891.

Pbm Chopperblitz anyone? Excellent PB article in PB wargamers guide. Will need to call via phone or mail to straighten out any confusion in rules. Ken Burke, 6 Meadowbrook Road, W. Hartford, CT 06107, (302) 521-2891.

A.R.E.A. rated 1200 (Prov.) seeks rated pbm, VITP, FE; ftf 3R, RF, PK, PGG. All letters answered. Tom Drennon, USS Trippie, FF 1075, FPO Miami, FL 34093.

Seeking female opponents only, between the ages of 22 and 35. Enjoy playing SOA, TT, and many others. Willing to learn games which you enjoy. M. Alba, 3507 S.W. 92nd Ave., Miami, FL 33165.

Wanted: FT pbm system for two player or refereed games. Looking for random number generators for results. C. Kent Henson, 7800 Lake Underhill Dr., Orlando, FL 32822, (305) 273-3097.

SL players wanted. SL thru GI. Ftf only. Les Cole, 1315 N.W. 58th Ave., Lauderdale, FL 33313, 583-4371.

Looking for friendly and professional ftf players within 50 miles of my area. Play 3R, TRC, FE, MD, BS, VITP, WAT, WAS, BL. Will try most others. Harry W. Hendley, 4124A Woods Edge Circle, Palm Beach Gdns., FL 33410, (305) 844-5529.

Wanted ftf gamers or gaming organizations in my general area. Kelly Jessop, 426 S. Lee St., A-7, Americus, GA 31709, (912) 924-2750.

A.R.E.A. rated 1600+ Prov. seeks 1400+ rated players for pbm; VITP, PB, BB'81, LW, TRC. (Special scenario for VITP). Will also GM for JUT. Steve Milanic, P.O. Box 201, Berwyn, IL 60402.

35-year old, (unproven A.R.E.A. rated 1200), beginning to average player seeks "live" adult gamer for: SL, PB, PL, AIW, FR, STAL, DIP. Mr. Leslie Boston, 326 E. Adams, Apt. #1, Havana, IL 62644, (309) 543-2103.

Young teen looking for ftf opponent for SL, PB, BL, MR, WQ, Pacific War, Dune or pbm Dune. Will teach pbm. Jeff Tabian, 439 E. 168th Street, So. Holland, IL 60473, 596-1255.

Ftf ASL opponent wanted in Southern IN. Northern KY. Also pbm with your system. Carl Pfeiffer, 268 W. 41st, #10, Jasper, IN 47546, (812) 634-2581.

Need ftf opponents for EIA, GL, WSIM, MR, SUB and others. Monte B. Gray, 2006 50th Place, Des Moines, IA 50310, (515) 255-4498.

SIEG HEIL! 2nd line ASL/DASL addict bucking for elite status. Need opponents for front line fighting. Ray Verbanic, 2200 W 43rd Ave., Kansas City, KS 66103, (913) 432-3454.

BAT-LOC FREE RF newsletter and Rules clearing house TRC analysis FREE latest RF, RALP, Free lifetime subscription. J. Williams, 2352 Le Havre Rd., Lexington, KY 40504, (606) 254-2168.

Wanted opponents for ftf or pbm 3R, W&P, MD, AK, PK, MD (will travel to play a game in Louisiana). Ricci Moran, P.O. Box 1065, Ruston, LA 71273, (318) 251-9038.

College student looking for tactician and/or strategist to play TB and/or PL. David Ramsay, 1513 Park Ave., Baltimore, MD 21217, (301) 523-7662.

Adult gamer seeks ftf opponents for 1776, 3R, SL, TRC, TB, PL, PB, AIW, FE, MR, AZ and others. Maurice Wiernicki, 9145 Chesley Knoll Court, Gaithersburg, MD 20879, (301) 963-4760.

Opponents wanted for almost any game. I own literally hundreds and haven't located any opponents since my recent move to NAS Patuxent River. David B. Brown, 704B Carpenter Park, Patuxent River, MD 20670, 863-7370.

Need players for pbm CIV, W&P and Conquistador. Mike Anchors, 1703 Wilmar St., Rockville, MD 20852.

Still on the prowl for pbm DIP and MR players. Drop me a line for more info, you won't be sorry. Trust me! Dick Martin, 26 Orchard Way, N. Rockville, MD 20854.

Having trouble finding mature, reliable opponents? Try AHKS! Over 600 members; a record of over 20 years of service to both pbm and ftf gamers. Bill Salvatore, AHKS Secretary, 19985 Wild Cherry Lane, Waters' Landing, MD 20874-1015.

Looking to form ASL Club and playtest group in greater Springfield Area. Also play UF, BANZ, FP, BB, RF. Vic Provost, 54 Edson Ct., Chicopee, MA 01020, 593-5849.

Looking for pbm opponents for old classics AK, WAT, STAL. All letters answered. Will also GM for multi-player Flat Top. James Cieslak, 22301 West Outer Drive, Dearborn, MI 48124, (313) 274-6965.

RF, 3R, good player prefers. Time limit moves ftf only. Also want to join local group for ftf DIP. Fred Winter, Box 43404, Detroit, MI 48243.

Flat Top! Players needed for pbm campaign, circa August 1942. Include side desired: Japan or Allied, first received for each side, will be Fleet Admirals. Kurt Romig, 26 Phillips Hall, MSU, East Lansing, MI 48825, (517) 355-4778.

Ftf opponents wanted, greater MSP area, esp. 1776, BIS. Willing to travel. Larry Stone, 1924 Stevens Ave., S. Apt. 7, Minneapolis, MN 55403, (612) 874-7419.

Any mature gamers in NW Twin Cities? I have 50+ games but few opponents. I'll pbm or ftf. Mark Thompson, 3749 Hillsboro Ave., N. New Hope, MN 55427, 593-0871.

Opponent Wanted: will challenge any players of Sixth Fleet pbm only. Also play SL pbm only. Will need a good system. Will respond to any letters promptly. Adam Kuhn, 17617 Old Manchester, Glencoe, MO 63038, 458-3713.

Old Timer non-rated wants friendly pbm honor system PB, PL. Consider AK, FT, MD, TLD. Phil Delaughter, 4025 Campbell, Kansas City, MO 64110, (816) 931-0693.

TRC gamer that will go the distance in a full campaign game, no optional rules. Will play either side. A.R.E.A. 1409. Demand first return moves. Ron Robertson, 2821 Fordham Dr., St. Louis, MO 63129, (314) 892-0455.

Hexagon Society meets every first and third Saturday from 10 A.M.—6 P.M. Call evenings for info: James McCormack, 1450 E. Harmon Ave., Las Vegas, NV 89119, (702) 794-3523.

Reliable adult (27) returnee to gaming seeks mature pbm opponents, AZ, BS, CAE, FL, GOA, TRC, W&P, WSIM and others. Will complete all games started. Jonathan B. Gawricki, 30 Wesley St., Clifton, NJ 07013.

Jersey Wargamers meet first and third Fridays, first and third Sundays each month. For info: Days Bob Wielgus (717) 992-5135, Evenings Bob Hahn (201) 276-3553, 596 Brookside Place, Cranford, NJ 07016.

16-year old experienced wargamer seeks teen opponents for ftf play. I play many games. I'll try anything. Looking for pbm GL or AF. Greg Witkowski, 32 Tall Tree Road, Middletown, NJ 07748, (201) 615-2393.

Need pbm player, variant, article for MA, SAT—\$6.00 for 10 issues. Society of Machiavellians, 430 Ocean Parkway, Suite 30, Brooklyn, NY 11218, (718) 826-2709.

Need G-8 players pbm modified MA. Need people for new ftf wargaming club (boardgames, miniatures, etc.) in metropolitan New York. Stuart J. Schoenberger, 430 Ocean Parkway, Suite 30, Brooklyn, NY 11218, (718) 826-2709.

Entry level gamer seeks any level opponent for pbm of BB, DD, AK, W.C. Kirby, 61 Hudson View Terrace, Highland Falls, NY 10996, (914) 446-8101.

EIA Campaign Game. Serious inquiries only please! Send top four country choices. Spain and Turkey have already been taken. Also FT campaign! Send side choice. Sean C. Turner, 943 Ivy Lane, Cary, NC 27511, (919) 481-4722.

Mature (37) newcomer to Charlotte seeks fun ftf and/or club. Primary interests Civil War/WWII. Consider myself experienced, average player. Gamers here? Jim Carr, 611 #5 Summey Ave., Charlotte, NC 28205, (704) 535-6838.

The Northern Tier ASL Club is seeking new players for ftf bouts. Contact: Dale Miles, 821 2nd Ave., N.E., Minor, ND 58701, (701) 852-1910.

Cleveland area marshals wanted for weekly EIA campaign game. Mature gamers only. No rules lawyers need respond. Raymond Schraff, 4013 Franklin Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44113.

Opponents wanted for ftf EIA game to begin in autumn. Should be able to commit to playing once a week for three months. Beginners welcome. Harry Hollern, 1660 Evinrude Ave., Columbus, OH 43229, 882-5241.

ASL'ers of N.E. Ohio. Meet other ASL'ers at Mayfield Library Sat. 12/12/87 at 9 A.M. For more info contact Rick Troha, 4485 Oak Circle, North Olmsted, OH 44070, (216) 734-4530.

ASL opponents! Rise from your foxholes to meet me in fair battle. Feign not bravery, prove it on the field of honor! Robert J. Zeller, 2203 Cass, Toledo, OH 43614, (419) 381-1344.

A.R.E.A. 1200 seeks pbm opponents for DD, TRC, and 3R but need system. Robert Drumheller, 821 George St., Coraopolis, PA 15108, (412) 262-3571.

Pbm opponent needed for PAA or PB. Also ftf for SL, ASL or UF. Anyone for pbm with scheme for ASL or SL. Louis D. Alessandra, 26 Balsom Court, Holland, PA 18966, (215) 968-5579.

I'm A.R.E.A. 1500+ verified and seek rated pbm RF and/or PGG. All foes 1200+ accepted and all ad responses answered. J.C. Lawson, 1515 Gist St., 4-E-5-37, Columbia, SC 29202.

Competent adult player seeking opponents for ftf ASL in the Clarksville area. Scenarios or DYO Marco campaigns. Will travel. Martin Titchen, 1834 Madison St., Apt. F-48, Clarksville, TN 37043, (615) 645-9378.

15-year old looking for an opponent to play TRC. Pbm only. Honor system only. Robert Croxdale, 315 Beech St., Morristown, TN 37813, (615) 586-5757.

VITP, FE, BB'81, AIW. All ASL, 2nd Fleet, Sixth Fleet. Will GM FT. Pbm/ftf where are the gamers in Mid Tenn. Area? Steve McBee, Rt. 1, Box 214, Normandy, TN 37360, (615) 857-3131.

Experienced (30) gamer seeks friendly competition (pbm or ftf Knoxville area) for FT, EIA, RF, 3R, VITP, WAS, WSIM, SUB, Civil War, W&P, 1830. Roger D. Hyman, 2713 Windmere Lane, Powell, TN 37849, (615) 947-5577.

Adult gamer in Friendswood seeking ftf TRC, DD, SL, STAL, or pbm TRC. Average player applying for A.R.E.A. J.K. Atkins, 5014 Encino, Friendswood, TX 77546, (713) 482-3604.

20-year old gamer wants ftf or pbm games of RF, 3R, COI and/or PL honorable and prompt. Mike Parks, 16807 Grouse Moor, Houston, TX 77084, (713) 550-2530.

Seeking pbm opponents for Kriegspiel open those old boxes and enjoy the game. Michael Bonden, 576 Northwood, Lewisville, TX 75067, (214) 436-8098.

Attention ASL gamers! Average SL player wants to learn ASL with another beginning ASL gamer. Have ASL through Yanks including SOF. Robert Gamez, 310 John Adams, San Antonio, TX 78228, (512) 737-1712.

Adult (36) 1200 (Prov.) gamer seeks A.R.E.A. rated gamers in PL, PB, others considered. All letters answered. Any Rio Grande Valley gamers? Kenneth Oates, 316 Hidden Valley Dr. #27, Weslaco, TX 78596, (512) 968-7984.

Ftf opponents in Utah, most AH games. Also pbm BL, SST, TAC, Tobruk, 1776. 26-year old gamer, A.R.E.A. 1200 Prov., rated or non-rated. Bill Dahle, 1217 W 4300 S #12B, Murray, UT 04123, (801) 261-1158.

Adult gamer seeks pbm opponents for CAE, and VG's Central America. Mike Steele, 3940 So. 1040 E., Salt Lake City, UT 84124, (801) 265-2365.

A.R.E.A. rated 1288 seeks pbm opponents for rated games of TRC, PB, PL. Harry T. Peet, Jr., RR 1, Box 655, Plainfield, VT 05667.

Seeking gamers in Washington, D.C. area. Where are you? Will play SL, COI, COD, PB, W&P, WAT, your games. Hugh McLinden, 2107 N. Glebe Rd., Apt #109, Arlington, VA 22207, (703) 243-3469.

Winchester, VA area gamer needs opponents. WV panhandle too. Will play and board game. John Kiley, 15 S. Greenway Ave., Boyce, VA 22620, (703) 837-1682.

Adult ftf opponent wanted for ASL, UF, TLD, BR and others. Robert Rczabek, HCl Box 383, Cross Junction, VA 22625, (703) 888-3289.

Adult gamer new to Richmond seeks ftf players for ASL, UF, RF. Will travel. Fun only. Average player with good knowledge of ASL rules. John Loth, 2018 Park Ave., Richmond, VA 23220, (804) 355-3376.

Experienced adult gamer wishes regular ftf for AZ, BR, FE, NP, PK, RF, VITP, others and will pbm AZ. I don't play SL series. Michael Sincavage, 125 Environs Rd., Sterling, VA 22170, 430-4706.

Pbm or ftf GOA. Also VG Civil War, Pax Britannica and more. Boris Sanders, 1329 Old Clubhouse Rd., Virginia Beach, VA 23456, (804) 427-2314.

Anybody in Bremerton looking for an opponent? Looking for a mature ftf antagonist. James D. Gray, 615 4th St., Bremerton, WA 98310, (206) 377-4343.

Luxembourg (Europe) Axis player waits for pbm challenges all Naval games + PL/WAT. Mande Roger, 76, rue Hzig 523 Luxembourg, Sandweiler, 359529.

THE QUESTION BOX

ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER

C1.21 & C1.211 Suppose a player wishes to Correct a FFE to a hex that is devoid of Known enemy units in its projected Blast Area. Before placing an AR counter, he must first gain Battery Access. Assume that he successfully does so, and after resolving the Accuracy dr/Extent of Error procedure he still has no LOS to a known enemy unit in the Blast Area of the Corrected FFE. Before resolving that FFE (in the same player turn) versus a target that did not enter the FFE, must the player again draw for Battery Access?

A. Yes.

C1.21 & C1.211 Battery Access must be regained before Correcting a FFE if that AR is to be placed in a hex devoid of Known enemy units in the projected seven-hex Blast Area, or before resolving a FFE versus a non-moving target if the Observer has no Known enemy unit in LOS in the normal seven-hex Blast Area. In applying either of these situations, if the FFE is from Rocket OBA or Harassing Fire would its 19-hex Blast Area be checked for Known enemy units (before requiring Battery Access to be regained) instead of just a 7-hex Blast Area?

A. No.

C1.23 If a Security Area has been set up for a Field Phone, would an Original Random Selection DR of "2" made by the opposing player for one of his units in the Security Area cause the Field Phone's line to be cut?

A. Yes.

C1.4 When correcting a red SR/FFE, the Extent of Error is limited to a maximum of one hex for every multiple of three hexes between the SR/FFE and the AR counter. In the EX that follows this rule, a four-hex Correction is shown to have a maximum Extent of Error of two hexes. But in a four-hex Correction, the number of hexes between the SR and AR counters is three, which gives a maximum Extent of Error of only one hex. Is the Maximum Extent of Error in fact limited to one hex for every three hexes [FRU] of range from the SR/FFE to the AR counter (as indicated in the EX)?

A. Yes.

C1.5 If a berserk unit is in the Blast Area of a friendly FFE, is its Morale Level lowered by one (A15.4)?

A. No.

C1.5 A unit must enter a FFE hex before it can be attacked; however, certain Locations in a FFE hex provide immunity to Indirect Fire—Sewer Locations, Interior Building Hex Locations that are below the highest level of that Building hex, and (for Indirect Fire from certain directions) Climbing Locations at Level 1 or higher. If a unit in a FFE hex is immune to Indirect Fire because it is in one of these types of Locations, is the unit "entering a FFE" if it

moves/routs/advances to a Location in its hex that does not provide immunity to Indirect Fire?

A. Yes.

C1.51 If a unit Withdraws from Melee during a CCPh into a FFE hex, is it attacked by the FFE?

A. Yes.

C1.82 During a Bombardment, if a unit fails its MC by more than its ELR and it also rolls Original Doubles for that MC, is the Casualty Reduction resolved after the ELR Replacement (A19.13)?

A. Yes—see A10.31.

C1.822 If a building is rubble during Bombardment, do you check for falling rubble?

A. Yes.

C1.822 During a Bombardment, does a roadblock that is not in a spared hex have to take a NMC? If it does, what is its Morale Level?

A. Yes. Morale Level is 10.

C2.24 & C2.2401 If a Gun with a Multiple ROF fires versus an AFV first in a Gun Duel, and it retains its Multiple ROF, can it make a second attack before the AFV makes its first attack?

A. No.

C3.7 "MG To Kill attacks have no CH possibility..." Are Fighter-Bombers, Stukas, and HMG (50 cal.) included as "MG" under this rule? Are 15mm weapons?

A. Yes. No (12.7mm).

C3.7 & C7.11 As I understand it, all CH against a non-HD AFV always hit its hull, since they occur only on an Original TH DR of "2". Thus, the Final TK# is always derived by using the hull AF, even if superior to the corresponding turret/upper superstructure AF. Is my understanding correct?

A. Yes.

C3.7 & C13.2 Can a LATW score a CH?

A. Yes, using the method described for use of the Vehicular Target Type.

C5.11 & D3.51 If an AFV in a rubble/building/woods hex fires a Gun as Bounding First Fire and that Gun retains its Multiple ROF, then I believe (as an EXC to C5.11) that the Gun would not have its CA fixed for further Bounding Fire in the same phase (i.e., the AFV could expend MP to change the Gun's CA in the same hex and fire it again from the new CA). Am I correct?

A. Yes.

C5.2 The rule contains the remark "(unless in Bypass)". Does this mean that a vehicle in Bypass is not subject to the Case B TH DRM?

A. No, delete the phrase "unless in Bypass".

C6.17 Suppose an AFV expends three MP to enter a hex which is in the LOS of a Gun that has a Multiple ROF. Can the Gun choose to try

to make three Defensive First Fire attacks versus that AFV (assuming Multiple ROF is retained), by using case J² each time (i.e., by breaking the 3 MP expenditure down into three 1-MP expenditures)?

A. Yes.

C6.42 Can the Crest level of a Depression hex be Bore Sighted by a Gun which does not have a LOS INTO the Depression? And if a Gun has a LOS INTO a Depression and it Bore Sights the hex, does its Bore Sighting DRM apply simultaneously to both the Crest and non-Crest levels of that hex?

A. Yes.

C6.5 If an AFV that currently has an Acquired Target is attacked in CC by some other unit, can the acquisition be retained? Can an AFV decline to attack back in CC with its CMG just to preserve Acquisition?

A. No. No.

C6.5 If infantry in the APH moves out of the CA of a Gun that has acquired it, but is still in the Gun's LOS, is the acquisition lost or can the CA be changed to retain it?

A. Nothing requires the CA to change—the target remains acquired as long as it is in LOS, and the Acquisition DRM will negate part of the Case A DRM when the CA does change.

C7.32 On the APCR/APDS To Kill Table, what is the Basic TK number for a Russian 76LL?

A. 18.

C7.346 When attacking a partially armored AFV with a DC, is it necessary to make a DC Position DR?

A. Yes.

C8.31 Suppose the LOS from a weapon to a target hex crosses a wall hexside of the target hex (as it enters the hex) but the Infantry units in the target hex would derive no wall TEM for an attack by that weapon because of elevation effects (B9.33) or because the units lack Wall Advantage (B9.32). In such cases, are the Infantry units considered "behind a wall", permitting the weapon to attack them with HEAT?

A. No. In C8.31, change the wording to "receiving a wall/building/rubble/pillbox TEM".

C9.3 If a MTR has a Spotter, can it fire at units that are in its manning unit's LOS but not in its Spotter's LOS?

A. Yes.

C10.3 In determining the Manhandling DRM based on TEM, if a Gun is pushed across a wall hexside via a road that goes through a break in the wall, is there still a +2 wall TEM Manhandling DRM? If a Gun is pushed into a non-pontoon bridge hex via a road hexside, is there still a +1 Manhandling DRM based on the bridge's TEM?

A. No. No.

C11.51 If the FP of a FG attacking a Gun includes both MOL and Small Arms Fire, could a gunshield DRM modify the attack?

A. Yes, but the FG could opt to decline its Small Arms FP and attack only with the MOL to avoid the gunshield DRM.

C12.21 The rule says that leadership DRM never apply when firing a RCL; can't a leader apply his leadership DRM to a RCL attack being made by a MMC in his hex?

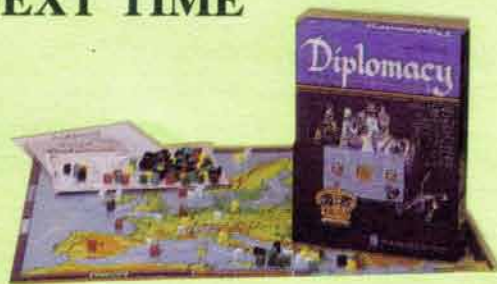
A. No.

The following games are ranked by their reader-generated overall Value rating. Further aspects of reader response to our titles are indicated by the ratings in other categories. By breaking down a game's ratings into these individual categories, the gamer is able to discern for himself where the title's strengths and weaknesses lie in the qualities he values highly. Readers are reminded that the Game Length categories are measured in multiples of ten minutes (thus, a rating of "18" equates to three hours).

ADVENTURE GAME RBG

Title	Overall Value	Components	Complexity	Completeness of Rules	Playability	Authenticity	Shortest	Longest	Year	Sample Base
1. 1830	1.94	2.16	5	2.67	1.83	3.93	19.33	34.60	1986	52
2. CIV	1.99	2.17	3	2.17	1.96	3.60	18.43	44.52	1982	126
3. TT	2.22	2.26	4	2.45	1.95	3.81	16.54	36.30	1982	53
4. DU	2.27	2.23	3	2.45	2.30	2.32	10.20	16.90	1979	110
5. DIP	2.30	3.18	3	2.41	1.82	4.83	24.46	46.24	1976	117
6. CM	2.44	2.88	3	2.65	1.85	2.54	9.71	18.96	1980	99
7. GSL	2.48	1.95	5	3.04	2.55	2.01	4.97	18.22	1982	86
8. MA	2.76	2.91	4	2.84	2.47	4.40	18.36	45.49	1980	26
9. SOTN	2.85	2.98	5	3.71	2.43	4.35	14.45	40.56	1979	56
10. FG	3.03	2.63	7	3.11	3.83	2.82	12.51	67.38	1981	51
11. KM	3.03	2.65	7	3.60	3.22	3.73	18.66	31.40	1976	147
12. SST	3.21	2.96	5	3.14	3.38	3.20	9.18	28.03	1976	127
13. WQ	3.27	2.70	2	2.67	2.21	3.94	10.91	17.53	1979	88
14. GL	3.31	2.73	4	3.02	2.89	2.88	3.90	11.02	1981	65
15. MR	3.42	2.01	7	6.01	3.91	3.18	9.63	29.02	1979	109
16. AW	3.60	3.48	4	2.48	2.33	5.06	9.82	16.52	1981	50
17. NW	3.88	3.67	2	1.84	1.65	6.92	3.28	10.92	1983	61
18. OS	4.35	3.28	3	2.45	2.79	4.24	5.11	11.54	1972	62
19. OR	5.26	3.84	1	2.73	3.96	5.27	9.92	15.42	1971	52

COMING UP NEXT TIME



1830

The Game of Railroads & Robber Barons

\$23.00

Although it has been over a year since we reviewed the "Adventure" RBG (last seen in Vol. 22, No. 5), 1830 leaps to the top of this list of non-wargames. Looks like developer Bruce Shelley and designer Francis Tresham did just about everything right. In almost every category of our survey 1830 rated above the average (as reported in Vol. 20, No. 2). The result of their effort is one of the best, and best-selling, railroad games on the market.

As can be seen at a glance, the components are superbly functional as well as eye-pleasing. The ratings for "Components", "Mapboard", "Counters" and "Player's Aids" are all superior. A great deal of information must be dealt with and evaluated by the players of this game, and the "hardware" of this finance game makes their task much easier. A true reflection of the depth of this simulation can be found in the 4.16 rating for "Complexity". Yet 1830 is complete, eminently playable, exciting and balanced—or so the figures in these categories would indicate. Only in "Authenticity" did the RBG survey ratings fall below the norm for our Adventure game titles. And it would appear that 1830, despite its depth of complexity and strategy, can be played to conclusion in a reasonable amount of

time, as the ratings for "Shortest" and "Longest" Game Length show (I would assume that the "Longest" rating reflects the full game with maximum players involved). Just the thing for would-be tycoons to pass the time away with on these long winter weekends.

Overall Value: 1.94
Components: 2.16
Map: 2.22
Counters: 2.27
Player's Aids: 2.83
Complexity: 4.16
Completeness of Rules: 2.67
Playability: 1.83
Excitement Level: 2.28
Play Balance: 2.02
Authenticity: 3.93
Game Length
 Shortest: 3 hrs., 13 mins.
 Longest: 5 hrs., 46 mins.
Year: 1986
Sample Base: 52

THE AVALON HILL GAME COMPANY'S BEST SELLER LIST

As is our custom, the editors once again present sales rankings for our line of game titles based on totals for the 1986 Fiscal Year, which began May 1986 and ended April 1987. Figures for the All-Time List include all versions of a title sold to date, provided the game system has not radically changed in any subsequent printing over the years. *D-DAY* and *FOOTBALL STRATEGY*, by way of example, have collectively passed through eight different editions—but each retains its original system. *GETTYSBURG*, on the other hand, has changed dramatically in each of its four versions and is therefore omitted from the list—even though the collective totals of its various incarnations would normally grant it a place. Titles are placed on the All-Time List only after having sold in excess of 100,000 copies while under The Avalon Hill Game Company's ownership. Readers should note that there are several games that qualify under this restriction but have not, as yet, surpassed the sales of *RICHTHOFEN'S WAR*.

1986 BEST SELLERS

Rank:	Title	1985 Rank
1.	SUPER SUNDAY	1
2.	STATIS-PRO BASEBALL	5
3.	FLIGHT LEADER	—
4.	STATIS-PRO FOOTBALL	9
5.	SPITFIRE 40	—
6.	PARATROOPER	—
7.	SQUAD LEADER	13
8.	DIPLOMACY	7
9.	PAYDIRT	—
10.	EMPIRES IN ARMS	—
11.	STATIS-PRO BASKETBALL	—
12.	THIRD REICH	11
13.	KNIGHTS OF THE AIR	—
14.	CIVILIZATION	14
15.	OUTDOOR SURVIVAL	8
16.	ACQUIRE	—
17.	GRIFFIN ISLAND	—
18.	RAIL BARON	—
19.	FIREPOWER	12
20.	FACTS IN FIVE	16

ALL-TIME BEST SELLERS

Rank:	Title	1985 Rank
1.	OUTDOOR SURVIVAL	1
2.	FACTS IN FIVE	2
3.	PANZERBLITZ	3
4.	SQUAD LEADER	6
5.	THIRD REICH	7
6.	TACTICS II	5
7.	LUFTWAFFE	8
8.	BLITZKRIEG	9
9.	FOOTBALL STRATEGY	10
10.	STATIS-PRO BASEBALL	12
11.	ACQUIRE	11
12.	DIPLOMACY	14
13.	MIDWAY	13
14.	PAYDIRT	16
15.	STARSHIP TROOPERS	15
16.	D-DAY	17
17.	AFRIKA KORPS	18
18.	WIZARD'S QUEST	19
19.	WAR AT SEA	—
20.	RICHTHOFEN'S WAR	20

Infiltrator's Report

It has been some time we looked at some of our financial games, and we were most pleased with the result. But the readers seemed to have been pleased as well, for the issue was acclaimed the best in the past nine years. Not since Vol. 14, No. 4 (which featured *VITP*) has our mix of articles and presentation been so complimented. So, with an Overall Rating of 2.56, our last issue of Volume 23 finished out our year with a flourish. Not surprisingly, Bruce Shelley's in-depth look at *1830* topped the list of fine articles. The ratings for all, based on a random sampling of 200 reader responses, are as follows:

A VERY GOOD YEAR	322
TAKE A RIDE ON THE READING	217
REVOLUTION AGAINST THE	
REVOLUTION	153
ALL ABOARD	144
THE LONG HAUL	93
BEYOND MANIFEST DESTINY	88
MY FAVORITE LINES	67
HOW YA GONNA KEEP 'EM DOWN	
ON THE FARM	44
A LITTLE HELP FROM FRIENDS	32
AH PHILOSOPHY	16

We must apologize to the dozens of people who volunteered for the ASL computer-assist program playtest and did not receive a direct reply from Mr. Greenwood. The unexpected size of the response precluded our contacting all those who offered their aid and support. If you have volunteered, and have not yet had a response, you can assume that all the playtest slots have been filled. Our sincere thanks to those who offered to give of their precious time.

The computer wizards among our readership should be interested in The Avalon Hill Game Company's latest publication, *ON LINE*—the "Quarterly Update on Microcomputer Games Software". The first issue, dated Fall 1987, has just appeared and offers news on the doings of Microcomputer Games. Regular features will be columns on the latest conversions, news of new games and works in progress, and brief articles on the play of them. The first issue, for instance, brings information on *GUDERIAN* (Atari, Apple II and Commodore), *DARKHORN* (Apple II and Commodore), and on the IBM-PC adaptation of VGs' *Civil War*. [Nor did it take *GUDERIAN* long to win acclaim; it received a Showcase Award at the June Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago.] Why, there's even news of the switch to smaller packaging for the computer game line. This informative little newsletter is available to those interested in the doings of our computer division simply by writing in and asking to be put on the mailing list.

It is with great regret that the fans, and his fellow designers, bid farewell to Mick Uhl. Mick has left the employ of The Avalon Hill Game Company to pursue his education; he began classes this fall at the University of Maryland in computer science. Mick will be sorely missed by us all, both for his inevitable good cheer and willingness to help as well as his insights and long experience in the hobby. Luckily, he has promised to drop by as often as his heavy course load will permit. Our best wishes go with him, and we fully expect to welcome him back into the ranks of hobbyists in two years when he finishes his planned program of study.

Back in Vol. 23, No. 6 we ran an ad for a game store that was serving as an outlet for The Avalon Hill Game Company. Now comes word that "Games 'N Toys Galore" has closed up shop. It seems that our bad luck with finding an outlet for our complete line, games and supplements and parts, continues. To those who may have stopped by, our apologies for your inconvenience. Hopefully, at some point in the future, we'll have better luck and find another full outlet.

Victory Games Wants You!

If you have designed a game, edited a game, produced graphics for a game, Victory Games wants to hear from you. We currently have positions available for:

- Game Designer/Developer
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Victory Games, Inc.
43 West 33rd Street
New York, NY 10001

Our first contest in some time that dealt with our favorite pastime (making money) drew quite a number of entries. When we had finished checking over all the routes detailed by those, we were left with 16 *1830* wizards who obviously knew how to "squeeze a turnip". Watch out for these fellows at the next tournament. A random drawing gave us the ten winners, each to receive a merchandise credit voucher from The Avalon Hill Game Company. No doubt each will invest it as wisely as they do when playing *1830*. The winners are as follows: Jim Burnett, Clinton, TN; Greg Buswell, Naperville, IL; William Davis, Denver, CO; Steve Koleszar, Charlottesville, VA; Andreas Schulmeyer, Cambridge, MA; Alan Stacey, Prince George, BC; Paul Tenney, Herndon, VA; Kenneth Valentine, Wheaton, IL; Jim Vroom, Bensalem, PA; Dennis Zeiters, Clemmons, NC.

Our most recent ASL challenge—Contest 137—posed a tricky game-end situation for the Russian player. To win, we were looking for the entrant to get eight VP onto Board 5. Unfortunately, an error crept into Contest #137; it was not intended that building 4CC6 be in the illustrated area. Its inadvertent inclusion created two separate set-up locations for the HIP 4-6-8, and thus generated two different possible solutions.

The original "correct" solution (i.e., with building 4CC6 excluded) was to forego all Prep Fire, then in the MPH to move the 7-0 leader first and in such a way as to draw the fire of the three 4-6-7s and of the hidden 4-6-8 (which could only have been in 4Y9). The sole method the 7-0 leader could do this without being prematurely pinned or broken was by the route 4Y7-X7-X8. The HIP 4-6-8 could fire on it neither in Y7 nor in X7, because in Y7 the 7-0 would not be moving closer to Board 5, and in X8 the 4-6-8's LOS to it would be blocked by the rubble (B24.2). Its three-MF expenditure to enter X8 would draw First, Subsequent First and Final Protective Fire from all units in X9 and Y9, thus allowing all other Russian units to enter Board 5 safely in their MPH/APh, giving the player eight VP (two each for the two squads, two for the crew and two for the mortar).

In view of the error in the diagram mentioned above, however, all entries that exited at least six VP without violating any rules were considered correct.

Dare to be different!



Only once in a great while . . .

. . . does a game dare to be truly different and abandon old concepts while striking out to chart virgin territory in game design.

Rarer still are the instances in which these games succeed in presenting a simulation of unparalleled realism in an easily understood, playable format.

Up Front is just such a game!

\$25 Retail

Gone are the hexes and charts of conventional wargames, replaced by innovative and attractive game components which have distilled a wealth of technical data into one of the most playable, yet detail laden, formats ever devised!

UP FRONT is a game of man-to-man infantry combat set in WWII Europe and is based loosely on the popular **SQUAD LEADER** game system. Players need not be familiar with any of the various **SQUAD LEADER** games or rules to play. The basic theory behind the design remains the same; only the mechanics of play differ. **UP FRONT** is a far simpler adaptation of **SQUAD LEADER** principles designed to a card game format. Yet, in many ways, the game is more realistic than its predecessor in that its inherent mechanics simulate the fear and confusion of the battlefield and the inability of leadership to assert itself far better than any tactical combat game yet published.

There is no playing board; it has been replaced by Terrain cards which become the "hexagons" of the game as players maneuver their forces via Action cards over constantly changing terrain. The scale of the game is measured in terms of relative

ranges between opposing forces, with most combat occurring within a scale distance of 500 meters during the course of player turns measured in varying seconds of actual time

UP FRONT is a game player's game, rich in detail yet easily playable within the space of a lunch hour. However, it also contains engrossing Multi-Player and Campaign Game versions which could last a week or more. Like **SQUAD LEADER**, its famous predecessor, **UP FRONT** is an open-ended game capable of depicting endless Design-Your-Own variations of small unit actions between American, German and Russian combatants. Tanks, Assault Guns, Smoke, Anti-Tank Rifles, Demolition Charges, Pillboxes, Partisans, SS, Entrenchments, Anti-Tank Mines, Infantry Guns, Flamethrowers, Armored Cars, Halftracks, Panzerfausts, Bazookas, Panzerschrecks, Wire, Ambushes, Radios, Artillery, Minefields, Mortars, Snipers, Starshells, Heroes, Prisoners and Fords are all accounted for.

UP FRONT encompasses almost everything that the **SQUAD LEADER** game system has taken four gamettes to do, and does so in a far more playable format. The game can be summed up in four words: innovation, playability, detail and realism. That's an unbeatable combination.

Up Front—the Squad Leader card game—is available in leading game stores everywhere, or direct from



The Avalon Hill Game Company

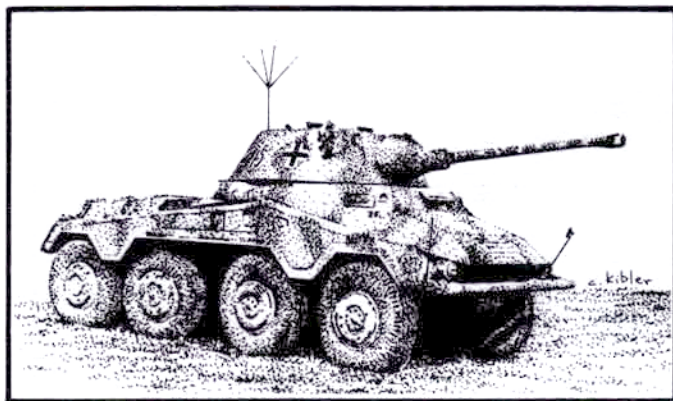
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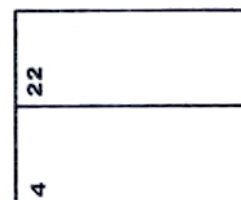


ASL Scenario T2



LEPEL, RUSSIA, 28 June 1944: During the destruction of Army Group Center the German front became pierced at many points. As the battlefield situation became more fluid, reliable information was of crucial importance to both sides. In the midst of the fighting an unusual clash occurred on the outskirts of Lepel—unusual in that both recon forces were commanded by seasoned, aggressive leaders.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:



BALANCE:

♣ Substitute a 10-2 armor leader for the 9-1 armor leader in the German OB.

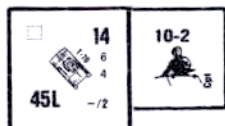
★ Add one Russian 8-1 armor leader.

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The side with the most points at scenario end wins; a tie is considered a Russian victory. Both sides get one point for every enemy AFV destroyed/Immobilized/Abandoned at scenario end. The Russian gets two points for every friendly AFV with functioning MA that exits the board off any west edge road hex (22A6/4A6). The German gets two points for every friendly AFV with functioning MA that exits the board off any east edge road hex (22GG6/4GG6).

TURN RECORD CHART

RUSSIAN Moves First	★ 1 ♣	2	3	4	5	6	END
---------------------	-------	---	---	---	---	---	-----

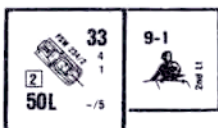
Recon Elements, 30th Guards Tank Corps enter turn 1 on 22GG1: {SAN: 0}



5



Panzer Aufklaerung Abteilung 5, 5th Panzer Division enter turn 1 on 4A10: {SAN: 0}



4



SPECIAL RULES

1. EC are Moderate, with no wind at start.
2. Russian AFV receive only ½ of their normal MP allotment on their turn of entry.

AFTERMATH: Although the primary responsibility of both groups was to avoid contact and obtain battlefield intelligence, the aggressive nature of both commanders prevailed. A vicious firefight ensued and in the end the superior mobility and rapid firepower of the German vehicles prevailed, though not without significant loss to themselves.

RANGER STRONGHOLD

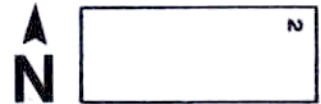


ASL Scenario T3



LATTARI MOUNTAINS, NW of SALERNO, ITALY, 14 September 1943: The First and Fourth Rangers, under the command of Bill Darby, landed at Maiori, west of Salerno on 9 September, 1943. They then moved 10km inland to block the road to Naples. Once established in the hills they became the major obstacle to German moves to retake Salerno from the west. Knowing that the Rangers lacked armor and heavy weapons, the XIV Panzer Corp was ordered to dislodge them.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:



VICTORY CONDITIONS: The German player wins if at game end all hexes numbered ≤ 5 in hexrows H through P (inclusive) are devoid of unbroken U.S. Infantry.

BALANCE










- ♣ Increase game length to 8 Game Turns.
- ☆ Replace German 9-2 leader with a 9-1 leader.

TURN RECORD CHART

♣ GERMAN Sets Up and Moves First [102]	1	2	3	4	5	6	END
--	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----









Kampfgruppe of the 16th Panzer Division [ELR: 3] sets up first in any hexrows W through FF, inclusive: {SAN: 2}

 1 4-6-7	 2 4-4-7	 9-2	 8-1	 8-0	 7-0	 2 5-12	 1 3-8	 14 75L 3/5
6	6						5	2



Elements of the First Ranger Battalion [ELR: 5] set up second in any hexrows B through U, inclusive: {SAN: 4}

 E 7-4-7	 E 3-3-7	 10-3	 8-0	 2 4-10	 43 X10 8-4
5				2	4



SPECIAL RULES:

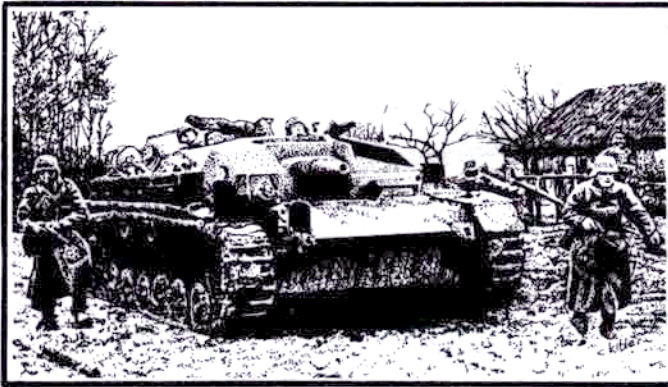
1. EC are Moderate, with no wind at start.

AFTERMATH: The Germans attacked repeatedly, slowly driving the Rangers back. However, by 15 September, the Germans had lost more than 45 tanks without having cleared the area. Faced with growing supply problems and increasing Allied strength the Germans withdrew on 22 September, allowing the Rangers to advance. German reports at the time spoke highly of the combat prowess of the Ranger Division, unaware that there were never more than three Ranger battalions involved!

SHKLOV'S LABORS LOST

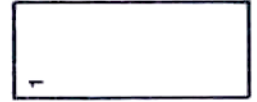


ASL Scenario T4



SHKLOV, RUSSIA, 11 July 1941: In the town of Shklov the German advance was frustrated by the determined defense of a handful of young Soviets. Skillfully using every advantage, the young officer cadets, known as "Stalin Scholars", were able to beat back the advance of the regular German forces. In order to break the deadlock the Germans ordered the crack Infantry Regiment "Grossdeutschland" to clear the town.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:



VICTORY CONDITIONS: The German player must Control buildings N5, M7, P3, P5 and P7 at game end.

BALANCE:

✦ Increase game length to 7 Game Turns.

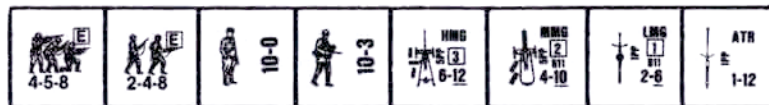
★ Add one 4-5-8 and an ATR to the Russian OB.

TURN RECORD CHART

★ RUSSIAN Sets Up First	1	2	3	4	5	6	END
✦ GERMAN Moves First							



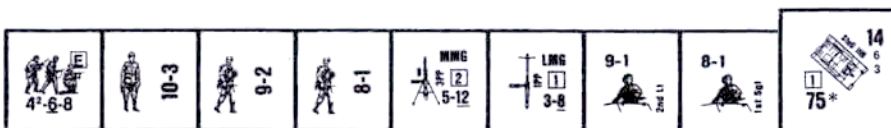
"Stalin Scholars" Officer Cadet Unit [ELR: 4] sets up east of hexes L0-L5-J6-J8-I9-I10, exclusive: {SAN: 4}



7



Elements of Infantry Regiment Grossdeutschland [ELR: 4] set up west of hexes L0-L5-J6-J8-I9-I10, exclusive: {SAN: 2}



9

2

4

2



SPECIAL RULES:

- EC are Moderate, with no wind at start.
- Upper Level Encirclement also applies to any non-heroic/non-bersek unit in an upper level building Location that cannot trace a path free of an unbroken, armed, unconcealed enemy unit/Blaze to ground level through Locations it could legally traverse if so inclined. This type of encirclement is broken the instant such a path can be traced.

AFTERMATH: The young cadets had defended in depth and so were able to destroy several assault guns that had attempted to cut off their retreat. Unfortunately this left their front line so weak that the Germans were able to capture the central buildings of the town. Desperate fighting occurred in and around the buildings but the superior German firepower prevailed. Final Soviet attempts to rescue their comrades and teachers trapped in the town square were beaten back by well-aimed machinegun fire. The remnants of the Stalin Scholar unit pulled back into the woods closely pursued by the Grossdeutschland troops, leaving behind dozens of the finest young men of both nations.

GAVIN TAKE



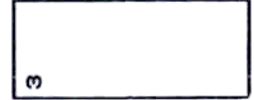
ASL Scenario T1



CHEF-DU-PONT, FRANCE, 6 June 1944: One of the responsibilities of the Airborne troops was the seizure of several key bridges following the D-Day drop. One of these bridges was at Chef-du-Pont. Gavin organized a pickup force to take care of this bridge himself. With elements of the 507th split into two groups he marched on Chef-du-Pont by closely parallel but different routes.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:

N



VICTORY CONDITIONS: The U.S. player wins by exiting \geq two HS (or their equivalent) and any one leader off Q10. For every German HS (one squad = two HS) that exits the board via Q10 the U.S. must exit an additional HS.

BALANCE:

✦ Add one 4-4-7 to German OB.

☆ Change the U.S. 8-0 leader to an 8-1 leader.








TURN RECORD CHART

✦ GERMAN Sets Up First	☆ 1	2	3	4	5	6	END
☆ AMERICAN Moves First [140]							



Outpost of Grenadier Regiment 1057, 91st Air Landing Division [ELR: 4] set up in any buildings within the area surrounded by road 3N4-U3-Q8: {SAN: 0}






 4'-6-7	 4-4-7	 8-1	 8-1	 8-0	 5-12	 3-8
4	3				2	3





Elements of 507th Parachute Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division [ELR: 5]: {SAN: 0}

Gavin-Maloney Force enters on turn one on hex 3Y1:

 7'-4-7	 10-3	 8-0
6		

Ostberg Force enters on turn one on hex 3I1:

 7'-4-7	 10-2
4	

SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Moderate, with no wind at start.
2. Hex 3M2 is rubble at ground level.
3. No Bore Sighting is allowed.

AFTERMATH: After sizing up the situation Gavin attacked. The combined forces flushed the Germans from the hamlet at the approaches to the bridge, but instead of giving up the Germans fell back onto the causeway with their machine guns. With the open ground denied by this heavy firepower the paratroops were denied the bridge.

Designed and playtested by Joe Suchar and Jon Mishcon.

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INSTRUCTIONS:

Rate each category by placing a number ranging from 1 through 9 in the appropriate space to the right (1 equating "excellent"; 5, "average"; 9, "terrible"). EXCEPTION: Rate items 7a and 7b in terms of minutes necessary to play the game, in ten-minute increments. (Example: If you've found it takes two and a half hours to play the basic scenario of *FRANCE 1940*, enter "15" for category 7a.) For an explanation of the categories, refer to the AH Philosophy of Vol. 19, No. 4. Sub-categories are indicated by italics. Enter ratings only for those categories relevant to the game in question. Note that AH's ratings for **Complexity** and **Year of Publishing** have been provided; do not rate these categories.

1. Overall Value _____
2. Components _____
 - 2a. Mapboard _____
 - 2b. Counters _____
 - 2c. Player's Aids _____
3. Complexity **10** _____
 - 3a. Complexity _____
4. Completeness of Rules _____
5. Playability _____
 - 5a. Excitement Level _____
 - 5b. Play Balance _____
6. Authenticity _____
7. Game Length _____
 - 7a. Basic/Shortest _____
 - 7b. Advanced/Longest _____
8. Year of Publication **1987** _____

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WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN PLAYING?

Top ten lists are seemingly always in vogue these days. Whether the subject is books on the Best Seller List, television's Nielsen ratings, or even games, the public never seems to tire of seeing how their individual favorites stack up numerically against the competition. Our preoccupation with this national pastime is almost akin to rooting the home team on to victory every Sunday. So to further cater to your whims (and to satisfy our own curiosity) we unveil The GENERAL's version of the gamer's TOP TEN.

We won't ask you to objectively rate any game. That sort of thing is already done in these pages and elsewhere. Instead, we ask that you merely list the three (or less) games which you've spent the most time with *since* you received your last issue of The GENERAL. With this we can generate a consensus list of what's being bought. The degree of correlation between the Best Selling Lists and the Most Played List should prove interesting.

Feel free to list any game regardless of manufacturer. There will be a built-in bias to the survey because you all play our games to some extent but it should be no more prevalent than similar projects undertaken by other magazines with a special interest-based circulation. The amount to which this bias affects the final outcome will be left to the individual's discretion.

The games I've spent the most time playing during the past two months are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

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4. Please PRINT. If your ad is illegible, it will not be printed.
5. So that as many ads as possible can be printed within our limited space, we request that you use official state and game abbreviations. Don't list your entire collection, list only those you are most interested in locating opponents for.

Advanced Square Leader—ASL, Afrika Korps—AK, Air Force—AF, Anzio—AZ, Arab-Israeli Wars—AIW, Banzai—BANZ, Beyond Valor—BV, Bismarck—BS, Blitzkrieg—BL, Britannia—BRIT, Battle Of The Bulge—BB, Bull Run—BR, Caesar Alesia—CAE, Circus Maximus—CM, Civilization—CIV, Dauntless—DL, D-Day—DD, Devil's Den—DEV, Diplomacy—DIP, Empires in Arms—EIA, Firepower—FP, Flat Top—FT, Flight Leader—FL, Fortress Europa—FE, Freedom in the Galaxy—FITG, Gettysburg—GE, Gladiator—GL, Guns Of August—GOA, Gunslinger—GSL, Hitler's War—HW, Kingmaker—KM, Knights of the Air—KOTA, The Longest Day—TLD, Luftwaffe—LW, Magic Realm—MR, Midway—MD, Napoleon—NP, Naval War—NW, PanzerArmee Afrika—PAA, Panzerblitz—PB, PanzerGruppe Guderian—PGG, Panzerkrieg—PK, Panzer Leader—PL, Paratrooper—PARA, Rail Baron—RB, Richthofen's War—RW, The Russian Campaign—TRC, Russian Front—RF, Streets of Fire—SOF, Squad Leader—SL, Stalingrad—STAL, Storm Over Arnhem—SOA, Submarine—SUB, Tactics II—TAC, Third Reich—3R, Titan—TT, Up Front—UF, Victory In The Pacific—VITP, War and Peace—W&P, War At Sea—WAS, Waterloo—WAT, Wooden Ships & Iron Men—WSIM.

_____	_____	_____	_____
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_____	_____	_____	_____

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CONTEST #138

Please indicate the first and second impulse moves of each unit by recording the final hex. Please indicate any attacks by showing enemy unit(s) attacked and odds attacked with. Use extra sheets if necessary and follow the same format as below:

Movement:

Unit	Final Hex of First Impulse	Final Hex of Second Impulse
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Combat:

Unit	Enemy Target	Odds
_____	_____	_____

Issue as a whole . . . (Rate from 1 to 10, with 1 equating excellent, 10 equating terrible)
Best 3 Articles

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

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A Nightmare ON ELM STREET THE GAME

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Three, four, better lock your door.
Five, six, grab your crucifix.
Seven, eight, gonna stay up late.
Nine, ten, never sleep again!*

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